

Sports

DeSales falls to Romulus; Kearney gains AA berth

By Richard A. Kiley

Romulus (4-0 league, 5-0 overall) ruined DeSales' Homecoming Game with a 22-6 Finger Lakes West victory over the Saints (3-1, 5-1) at Loman Field on Saturday, Oct. 15. The victory assures the Warriors of at least a share of the divisional title.

After the Saints jumped out to an early 6-0 lead on a 51-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Ron Cecere to Aaron Mantegna — marking the first time the Warriors had trailed in a game this season — the Warriors' defense settled down.

The Saints' offense committed three turnovers for the day, two of which came at crucial times. On the first play of the second quarter, Romulus junior Jessy Jefferson got his hands on a DeSales option pitch and fell on the ball at the Saints' 12-yard line. Todd Hilkert scored on the very next play to tie the game, and then Scott Pagano converted the ensuing two-point conversion to give the Warriors an 8-6 lead.

"That turnover, to me, was the turning point of the game," Taney said. "We seemed to be moving the ball on them, and then their half-back came up and just made a great play."

The second costly turnover came on DeSales' first drive of the second half. After moving the ball from their own 19 to Romulus' 30-yard line, the Saints mishandled a handoff to bring an end to that drive.

Turnovers coupled with injuries to key DeSales defensive players — Jeff Taney and Frank Caravita — also seemed to doom the Saints. The absence of the two defensive stalwarts allowed Romulus to do what it does best — run.

The Warriors ran for 193 yards on 35 carries, accounting for nearly all of the offense (212 yards).

"Those injuries really hurt us; we felt we could give them problems if we made them pass the ball," said Taney, referring to the fact that Romulus has attempted only 13 passes in four league games.

Romulus did complete two of four passes against the Saints. One completion, a 20-yard pass from Adam Stenberg to Dan Faiola, set up the Warriors' second score. On the ensuing play, Stenberg scooted 13 yards for a score to open up a 14-6 bulge. The two-point conversion by Hilkert made the score 16-6 at the half.

Hilkert scored his second touchdown of the day on a 13-yard sweep to the left side with 1:54 remaining in the game to seal the win for Romulus.

Chris Ike was a bright spot for the Saints offensively, carrying the ball 19 times for 125 yards. With the exception of Cecere's 51-yard touchdown pass to Mantegna, DeSales' passing game was stifled all day by a furious defensive rush by Romulus. Cecere was sacked six times for 57 yards.

Romulus can win the Finger Lakes West title outright with a win over Dundee on October 29.

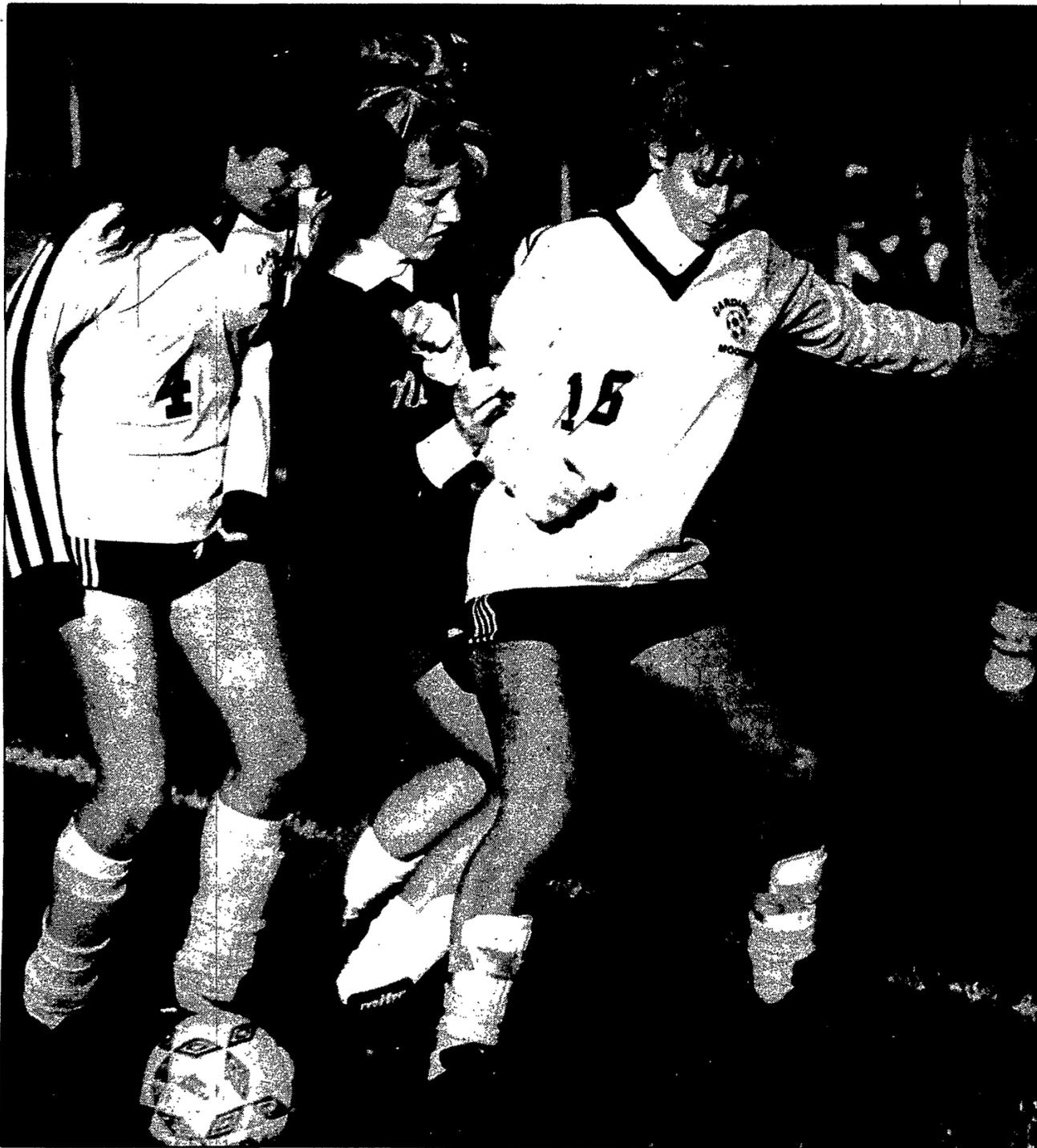
DeSales has another tough game this weekend, as the Saints travel to Batavia to face Notre Dame (3-1, 4-2) on Saturday, Oct. 22, at 7:30 p.m. The Saints finish up the regular season with a league game at home against South Seneca on October 29.

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Linda Dow Hayes/Courier-Journal

Geneva DeSales halfback Chris Ike (7) runs with the ball during the Saturday, Oct. 15, matchup against Romulus. Todd Hilkert (14) of Romulus cuts Ike off, helping the Warriors to a 22-6 win over the Saints.



Linda Dow Hayes/Courier-Journal

Sandwiched in between Cardinal Mooney's Kris Borzilleri and Sue Wegman is Nazareth Academy's Amy Attridge. The Cards prevailed in the Private-Parochial League matchup, 4-0.

Elmira ND geared for playoff run; Mooney on a roll

By Richard A. Kiley

Last fall, the girls' soccer team at Elmira Notre Dame High School — playing at the varsity level for just the second full season — advanced to the Section 4 Class C final game before losing to Groton.

This year's team is even better, according to head coach Steve Weber. The Crusaders, — who were 0-5 at one point this fall — are now 6-9. That's quite an accomplishment for a team that plays against Class A and B schools most of the season.

"We're a much better team than last year," Weber said. "Three or four players dominated for us last year, but this year we have nine players we can count on."

Although ND's resurgence has been a team effort, three players have emerged as leaders offensively. Melanie Crisco (9 goals), Katie Cain (9 goals) and Heather Leljedal (7 goals) have given Weber the balance last year's sectional runner-up didn't possess.

ND only won one game last year in which leading-scorer Nat Kozlowski didn't find the net, and that was a 2-1 overtime victory over Trumansburg in the sectional semifinals.

Unlike their performance in the first five games this fall, the Crusaders have been scoring in bunches lately. They have 28 goals over their last 10 games, including three in a 3-2 overtime win against Southside. The Hornets came into the game with just one league loss in their previous six games.

Notre Dame's other recent wins have been romps: a 5-0 victory over Corning on October 13, a 4-1 drubbing of Elmira Free Academy on October 11 and a 4-0 shutout of Bath on October 8.

One of the two losses the Crusaders suffered over the last six games was marked by controversy. In a game that went into overtime, Hammondspport beat Notre Dame 2-1 Saturday, Oct. 15. The winning goal appeared to come into the ND goal after it hit the hand of a Hammondspport player.

Still, Weber's team should be among the top four seeds in Class C when the seedings come out this weekend. Trumansburg will probably be the top seed, followed by Davenport, Groton and Notre Dame.

And Weber seems to like his team's chances. Private-Parochial League teams are also heading into the regular season's final week. After losing its first game of the season to Hilton, 3-0, back on October 11, Cardinal Mooney (10-1-4) rebounded with shutouts of Nazareth and Greece Athena last week. The win over Nazareth clinched at least a share of the league

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