

Sports

# Buntich 'takes over' in OT victory over Mooney

By Richard A. Kiley

Our Lady of Mercy and Cardinal Mooney have had some memorable girls' basketball games over the years, but the Monarchs' 59-57 double-overtime win in the championship game of the Mercy Invitational last Saturday, Jan. 7, is one fans will talk about for a long time.

At least, that is, until the next meeting between the two Private-Parochial League foes this Thursday, Jan. 12. That game, which will be played in Mercy's gymnasium, will count in the league standings.

Last Saturday's championship game at Nazareth College featured an heroic performance from tournament most valuable player Julie Buntich. The senior guard scored 20 of Mercy's 24 points down the stretch, bringing the Monarchs (6-0) back from a six-point deficit in the fourth quarter. The shooting clinic offset an equally impressive game by Mooney's Marisa Shackelford, who scored 26 points for the Cards (8-1).

Mooney's tough man-to-man defense seemed to give Buntich some problems earlier in the game. She shot just 2-for-13 from the field during the first three quarters, making her offensive display in the fourth quarter and the two overtime sessions even more impressive.

"She was getting her shots; they just weren't falling for her," said Mercy coach Kathy Boughton, whose team won the tournament for the first time since the event's inception four years ago. "She's probably one of the best penetrating guards in the county, so I told her to start to take control."

Buntich sandwiched a layup and a jump shot between two free throws to tie the game midway through the fourth quarter. The Mercy guard, who has been rated one of the top 20 high school girls basketball players in the state by *USA Today*, added another field goal and two free throws in the waning moments of the fourth quarter to tie the game, 51-51, after regulation play.

"We went into our 'Buntich offense' in the fourth quarter," said Boughton, who starts two sophomores, two juniors and occasionally a freshman. "I asked her if (the pressure) was too much for her, but she loves it."

The Monarchs continued to go to their star guard in both overtime sessions, as Buntich scored all eight of her team's points in the extra periods. She forced the second overtime with a fall-away jumper at the buzzer, after taking a pass from Mary Beth Cleary.

It was a performance that Boughton had seen before — in Buntich's career-high 30-point effort against Mooney last year — but one the Mercy coach said her guard is rarely recognized for.

"She's an exceptional athlete, but she is very underrated," Boughton said. Although Buntich's scoring average is an impressive 23 points per game, she often watches the last quarter-and-a-half from the sidelines because the Monarchs have been winning big this year. Such was the case in Mercy's resounding 70-38 win over Utica Notre Dame in the opening round of the Mercy Invitational. Buntich still shared team high-scoring honors with Maggie Whelehan, as both finished the game with 15 points.

Mooney hadn't lost a game until the Mercy Invitational. The Cards eked out a 46-43 win over traditionally strong Sacred Heart of Buffalo in the other first-round game. As has been the case all season, Shackelford was a dominant

force for the Cards, scoring 19 points and grabbing 12 rebounds.

But Mooney couldn't put Mercy away in the title game. Despite the loss, Mooney coach Scott Morrison said his team is eager to play Mercy again this week — even though the game will be played in one of the most dreaded gymnasiums in Rochester.

"They (his players) didn't feel that bad after the loss because they knew they played pretty well the whole game," Morrison said. "Hey, they had to struggle to tie us in regulation."

Asked if he would do anything new to try and stop Buntich next time around, Morrison was quite matter-of-fact.

"I really don't know. We stopped her for three quarters by playing our usual man-to-man," he said. "She's hard to handle when she starts shooting her fall-away jumpers."

**OVER IN SECTION 4** Class C, Elmira Notre Dame (7-4) had a three-game winning streak stopped at Elmira Free Academy on Saturday, Jan. 7, as Academy dropped the Crusaders in a Sullivan Trail Conference game, 48-26.

ND had a rough time handling EFA's Samantha David, who scored 16 points and collected nine rebounds. Teammate Alice Parker was also a force for EFA — a Class-B school — as she scored 12 points.

Cathy Lynch continued her strong play this season, pacing the Crusaders with 14 points and five assists.

The Crusaders sandwiched a win over another Class B school, Corning West, between two wins over Edison in their previous three games. During both wins over Edison, ND's defense was able to keep high-scoring Sara Dibble (25 ppg) in check. In a win over Edison on Thursday, Jan. 5, Lynch scored 20 points for ND, but the story of the game was Jennifer Fagan's defense on Dibble.

Fagan — a 5-foot-4 sophomore guard — held Dibble to 17 points and nine rebounds while collecting nine rebounds, five assists and nine steals.

She held Dibble to 16 points in the consolation game of the Elmira Christmas Tournament back on Dec. 29. "I think she (Fagan) is one of the top defensive players in the area," said Sobkowski, who added that Fagan has led the team in scoring in three games. "She hustles all over the court."

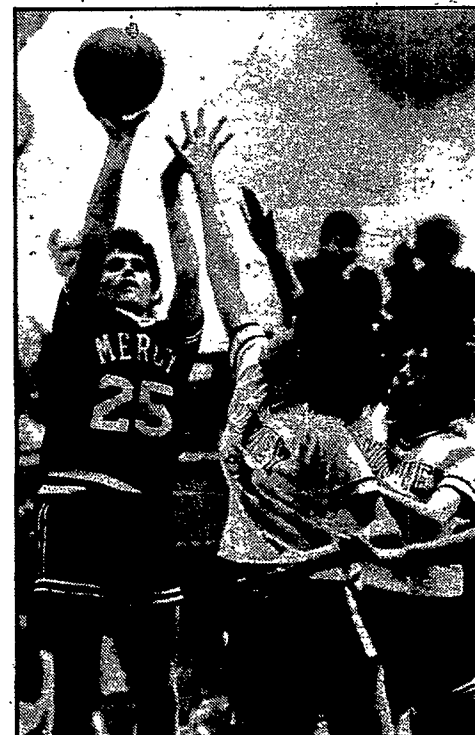
Against Corning West, the Crusaders pulled away in the final two minutes of the game to win 40-32. Fagan led ND in scoring with 10 points, and also had eight rebounds, seven steals and three blocked shots.

Lynch, Julie Cox and Melissa Jaskoika finished with eight points each.

Notre Dame will be severely tested this week with games against Horseheads (Jan. 10), Corning East (Jan. 13) and Dryden (Jan. 14).



Marisa Shackelford of Cardinal Mooney High School dribbles past Mercy's Kim Cacamise in the final game of the tourney. Mercy won 59-57 going into two overtimes with the Cards.



Mercy senior Julie Buntich (25) shoots over Cardinal Mooney defenders Amy Harrison and Shannon Barry.

## McQuaid basketball team returns from south, wins twice

By Richard A. Kiley

McQuaid Jesuit might have found the Rochester weather a little tough with after returning from its trip down south over the holidays, but the Knights found the competition a bit easier to take.

After losing twice during the rugged Kingdom of the Sun Tournament in sunny Florida, Joe Marchese's club got back to winning by posting victories over Wilson and Marshall last week.

Against Wilson, center Drew Henderson scored 20 points, grabbed 25 rebounds and blocked 10 shots to propel host McQuaid to a 73-52 win over its non-league opponent on Friday, Jan. 6.

Reggie Wade continued his impressive play by scoring 19 points, while teammate Matt Parrinello poured in 10 points and dished out 10 assists.

It took two quarters for McQuaid (5-2, 5-4) to get into gear against Marshall on Tuesday, Jan. 3. The host Knights trailed by one at halftime, 29-28, before outscoring its non-league opponent, 40-18, over the final two quarters.

### New coaches at BK

Bishop Kearney Athletic Director Nick Teta recently announced the appointment of two new wrestling coaches at the Catholic high school in Irondequoit.

Vincent Asito, formerly the junior varsity wrestling coach, has moved up to the varsity spot. Asito, who graduated from Kearney and Monroe Community College, has also coached grapplers at Eastridge Junior High School.

Anthony Bianchi has been tabbed to take over the JV program.

Henderson overcame a stingy defense by the Jurists, scoring 11 points and collecting 11 rebounds for McQuaid.

Marchese's club played at Franklin on Tuesday, Jan. 10. The Knights return home with another non-league game against Edison on Friday, Jan. 13.

Aquinas Institute ran up against a buzzsaw in East High on Friday, Jan. 6, as Mike Dianetti's Little Irish dropped a 57-37 decision to the host Orientals.

East had led by just 15-12 after one quarter and 27-25 at the half, but iced the game with a 7-0 run in the third quarter. AQ was able to score just 12 points the entire second half.

Alcindor Coleman led AQ with 12 points. Paul Kuczewicz had 11 for Aquinas.

Aquinas scored an exciting 78-77 win over Edison on Tuesday, Jan. 3, when Matt Hill — scoring his only points of the game — hit a shot at the buzzer to thwart the Inventors.

Three players scored 20 points or more for the Little Irish (8-3). Kuczewicz had 27 points, Dwayne Postell scored 21 and Todd Reynders poured in 20 for AQ.

Herman Humphries led Edison with 31 points.

Cardinal Mooney dropped back-to-back contests to East and Wilson last week. Ed Nietopski's Cards (5-6) continued to play strong defensively, but are also having difficulty scoring points.

Against Wilson on Friday, Jan. 6, Mooney lost the game when Cecil Green scored a layup with :16 left to clinch the Wildcats' 47-46 win. Moments before Green's winning basket, Sean Rhodes had given the Cards a 46-45 lead with a three-point basket. Center Mike McGwin paced Mooney with 24 points.

Against East on Tuesday, Jan. 3, the host Cards could muster just 10 points in the first half during a 57-28 loss against the Orientals. Eight of the Cards' first-half points came at the foul line. East led 28-10 at intermission.

McGwin led Mooney with 13 points.

Bishop Kearney dropped non-league games to Franklin and Edison to fall to 4-6 for the season. The Kings were unable to overcome a relentless press by the visiting Quakers in a 107-64 loss.

## Aquinas remains undefeated after beating McQuaid, Batavia icemen

By Richard A. Kiley

Aquinas Institute's hockey team improved its record to a perfect 9-0, as the Little Irish defeated McQuaid and Batavia in two key Monroe Hockey League games.

Against the Knights at Lakeshore Rinks on Saturday, Jan. 7, Ric' Cumble's Little Irish got two goals from Stan Lyng and strong goaltending from Bob Carello to notch their ninth win.

Ewing had given AQ the lead with a power-play goal 5:29 into the second; only to have McQuaid tie the game two minutes later.

But Chris Fess, who has been on fire this season for AQ, gave his team the lead for good with a goal just before the 10-minute mark of the second period. Ewing iced the game with an empty-net goal in the final seconds.

Carello turned away 15 of 16 shots he faced to record the win.

Against the Ice Devils on Wednesday, Jan. 4, Fess scored three goals as AQ routed Batavia, 9-3, at Lakeshore.

Franklin scored 41 points in the second quarter alone, as Trent Jackson's team roared out to a 60-23 halftime lead.

Center Greg Mikell led Kearney with 11 points.

Mike Ruff's Kings lost to host Edison, 78-51, on Tuesday, Jan. 3. Kearney had a tough first half once again, as the Inventors jumped out to a 41-18 lead at halftime.

Wendell Spiva paced Kearney with 17 points, while Burt Richardson finished with 15.

Fess also collected two assists, as AQ broke open a 2-2 game with four unanswered goals in the middle period.

Joe Nuccitelli had two goals and two assists for Aquinas, and Ewing also found the net twice.

In other Monroe Hockey League action from last week, Bishop Kearney fell behind 3-0 against Brighton before rallying for a 10-6 at Lakeshore on Saturday, Jan. 7.

Kearney had a big second period, scoring six goals to squelch any Brighton hopes for an upset win. Kearney's Ken Doohan — who is among the top 10 scorers in Monroe County Hockey League history — and Dan McGuinn scored two goals each for the Kings in the second period.

Bill Zabelney, a senior iceman who plays with an artificial leg, also scored for the Kings. The goal marked his first in two years on the varsity.