

Sports

Late surge lifts Aquinas; Notre Dame falls in 2 OT

By Richard A. Kiley

After three quarters of the City-Catholic League basketball game between Aquinas and Bishop Kearney Friday, Jan. 20, it looked like Kearney coach Mike Ruff would upset his former team.

That was not to be, however, as the Little Irish (10-5) used a 24-9 fourth quarter to defeat the host Kings, 64-52.

Kearney led 29-22 at the half and 43-40 at the end of the third quarter, but could not hold off Aquinas in the final period. Todd Reynnders led the Little Irish with a game-high 18 points. Paul Kucwicz collected 14 points and 10 rebounds for Mike Dianetti's club.

Sophomore center Greg Mikell scored 16 points for Kearney. Bill Tehan finished with 15.

In non-league action from last Friday, Jan. 20, McQuaid Jesuit scored an impressive 69-55 win over Syracuse-area titan Bishop Ludden. The Knights, who were led by Reggie Wade's 16 points, shot 13-for-18 from the field in the second half. McQuaid led 31-26 at the half.

The game marked the return of McQuaid center Drew Henderson, who collapsed during a loss to Franklin on Jan. 10. Henderson scored 14 points.

McQuaid scored a thrilling 76-73 win over visiting Wilson on Tuesday, Jan. 17, when Mike Montesano nailed a three-point shot at the buzzer. Teammate Kevin Brown had forced the extra session with a jumper just as regulation time expired.

The Knights squandered a 45-31 lead at half-time and found themselves down 68-66 with :06 remaining in regulation before Brown's heroics.

Kearney, Mooney drop City-Catholic

By Richard A. Kiley

Bishop Kearney and Cardinal Mooney have withdrawn from the City-Catholic football league and will compete as independents beginning next fall.

Nick Teta, Kearney's football coach and athletic director, confirmed earlier this week that the move was based on enrollment differences. Teta said that although his school's enrollment has remained "pretty constant with about 600 students," the consolidation of eight city high schools into five has "made the city schools just too big" for BK, both physically and in number.

According to figures used last season to determine sectional classes, Kearney had 661 students enrolled in grades 10-12. The reorganization of city high schools has caused a 50 percent jump at East (1,627 students) and the number of students at Marshall (1,168 students) to more than double.

"We want to play with schools of comparable size," said Teta, who guided the Fighting Kings to a 6-2-1 record (5-1-1 in the City-Catholic League) last season and their second consecutive trip to the sectionals. The Kings' only loss in the league was at the hands of East, 20-0. A statement released by the school Monday, Jan. 23, showed that prior to this decision, Teta had offered a proposal for realignment of the league. The schedule would have matched schools of the same enrollment and would have given smaller schools the choice of crossover play against larger schools.

"Our proposal was barely considered and rejected," Teta said. School administrators and league officials did approve an alignment that would have "forced small schools to play three games against bigger schools," the release stated. "We do not consider the current format of the City-Catholic League to be in our best interests," Teta said.

Cardinal Mooney Athletic Director Ed Nietopski said that his school left the football league "to get our football program back on firm ground." The Cards were 0-7 in the league and 0-8 overall last fall, and have just 12 wins over the past six seasons.

"We're doing this until we get our program back together," Nietopski said. "Hopefully it's just a temporary thing."

Nietopski added that although enrollment at Mooney has "for the most part been looking up, we haven't been getting the type of kids (necessary) to compete in football.

"We've got the potential... we just need a re-trenchment period. I guess you can call it a leave of absence," the athletic director said.

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Behind the free-throw shooting of Wade, who netted five of six free throws in the overtime session, McQuaid built up a 73-68 lead, only to have Wilson tie the game at 73-73.

Wade led the Knights with 24 points. Jay Moore and Brown had 19 and 17 points respectively.

In other non-league action from Tuesday, Jan. 17, visiting Cardinal Mooney pulled away from Penfield in the fourth quarter to notch a 52-47 win. Ed Nietopski's Cards outscored the Chiefs 18-8 in the final six minutes. Center Mike McGwin had 14 points for Mooney.

Over in Section 4 Class C, it took two overtimes for one of the Sullivan Trail Conference's top teams to beat Elmira Notre Dame last Tuesday, Jan. 17. Mike Johnston's Crusaders (1-7 league, 6-10 overall) eventually succumbed, 97-95, but not before taking their crosstown nemesis to the limit.

Notre Dame trailed 63-49 with six minutes left in regulation before outscoring Southside 33-19 down the stretch. Geoff Woodworth was on fire in the fourth quarter, nailing four three-pointers. Woodworth hit a three-point shot with :08 remaining to pull the Crusaders even, 82-82.

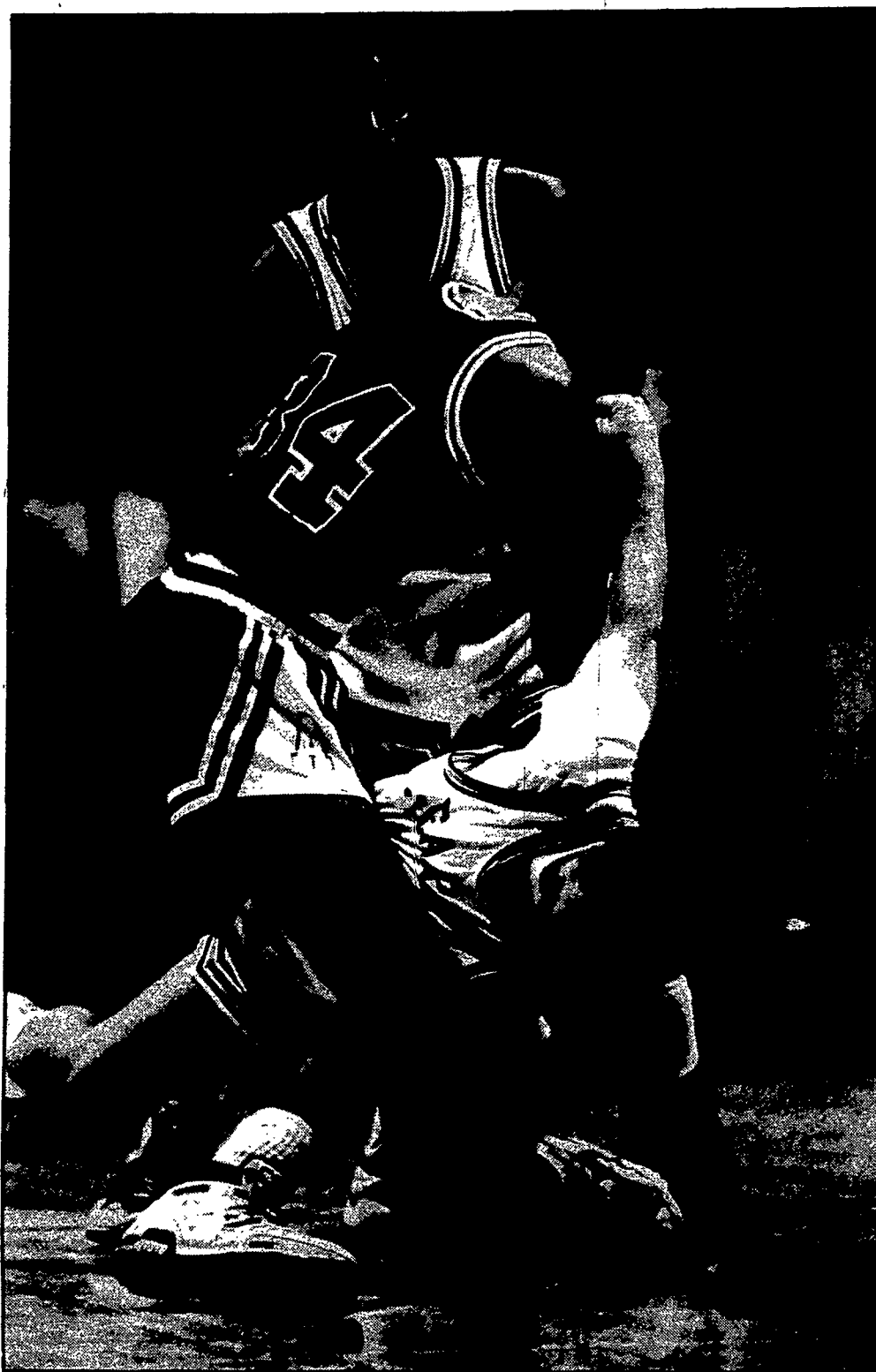
Sophomore point guard Brian Sheehan was the catalyst for the comeback, getting the ball in Woodworth's hands whenever possible. Sheehan was an offensive star himself, pouring in 24 points. Mike Bennett had 20 points and Woodworth finished with 16. Bob Grosvenor and Rob Agan had 13 and 12 points, respectively.

"It was the most exciting game I've ever been involved in but didn't win," said Johnston, who was philosophical in defeat. "What I look at it is, Did we make progress? Are we getting better? The competition is extremely difficult, but it gets us ready for the sectionals."

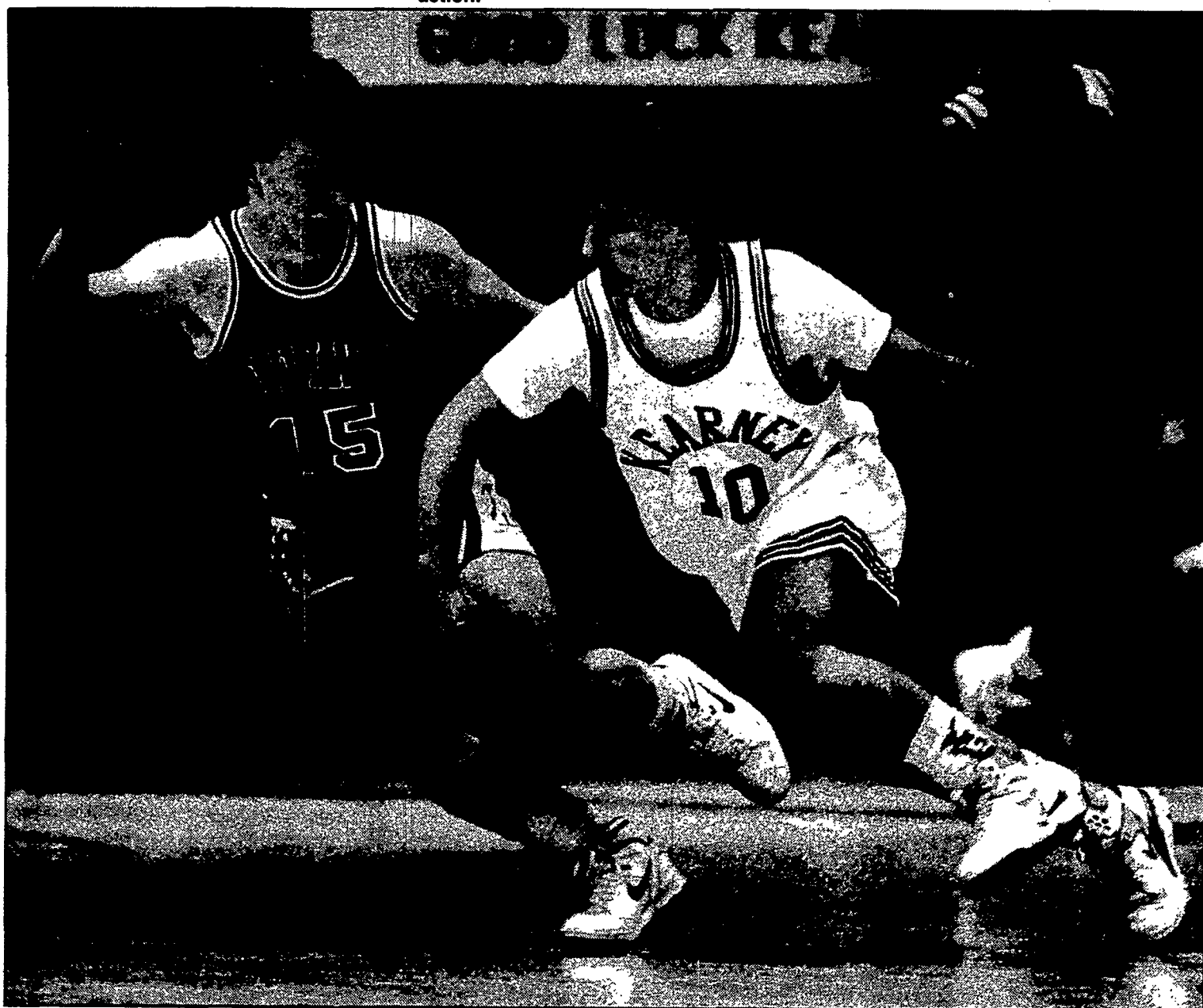
ND rebounded from the disheartening loss with an 80-73 win over IAC champion Trumansburg (14-2). The Crusaders have handed T-burg its only two losses this season.

ND led 19-15 after one quarter before moving out to a 39-32 halftime lead.

Sheehan led ND with 23 points. Bennett had 14 points and 12 rebounds. Bill Updyke came off the bench and converted two missed free throws in the fourth quarter. Updyke had 13 points, eight of which came in the fourth quarter.



Linda Dow Hayes - Courier-Journal
Aquinas' Dwayne Postell straddles Bishop Kearney's Dave Armanini and struggles with Wendell Spiva as the three vie for possession of the ball during Friday night's action.



Bishop Kearney's Dave Armanini (10) drives past Aquinas' Matt Hill (15) during the Jan. 20 game. The Kings held a solid lead into the fourth quarter, but the Little Irish came from behind to win 64-52.