

Sports

Monarchs deal Cards third loss, take title; Saints at .500

By Richard A. Kiley

The play wasn't designed for her, but Our Lady of Mercy's Catherine Robinson can lay claim to making one of the biggest shots of the girls' basketball season.

With the shot clock showing three seconds and Mercy clinging to a 46-42 lead at Mooney last Thursday, Feb. 2, Robinson nailed a three-point basket with 1:30 left to give the Monarchs (8-0 league, 17-0 overall) a seven-point lead. Mercy tied a bow on the Private-Parochial League championship with a 51-42 win.

"When she (Robinson) first put the shot up, it looked like a brick," said Cardinal Mooney coach Scott Morrison, whose team fell to 14-3. "She wasn't even supposed to take the shot."

Uh, not according to Mercy coach Kathy Boughton, Scott.

"That's what he says," Boughton quipped after watching the Monarchs — ranked seventh in the latest state poll of Class A girls' basketball teams — defeat her old school for the third time this season. All three games were eerily similar, with Mercy winning with strong fourth quarters. "There was only three seconds on the shot clock, so we were all yelling for her to shoot."

Robinson's shot culminated an uphill battle for the Monarchs, who trailed 23-17 at the half. Although Mercy was behind at intermission, Boughton was pleased to have Mooney's dominant offensive player, Marisa Shackelford, in foul trouble.

"We went into a three-two zone in the second half and made quite a few steals," Boughton said. "They never saw us play that type of defense. We really picked it up in the third quarter."

The Monarchs were able to tie the game at 36-36 at the end of the third quarter, which saw Margie McGuire reinjured the same knee she hurt during soccer season. Morrison did not know the extent of the injury.

The Cards were hit with more bad luck in the fourth quarter, when Shackelford fouled out of the game.

Julie Buntich finished with 18 points to lead Mercy. Sophomore center Natalie White, who has proven to be a worthy replacement for the injured Bernadette Fagan, scored 15 of her 17 points in the second half.

Boughton said the win achieved a goal her

team set for itself when the season began in December: to win the Private-Parochial League.

The Monarchs still have unfinished business, though. Boughton said her club wants to be the top seed in the sectionals, but the Monarchs still have to get by Fairport (Feb. 8) as well as Lewiston-Porter and possibly Brockport in the Brockport tournament this weekend.

Boughton believes Brockport (16-2) has the type of team that could give her Monarchs some trouble. Nancy Alexander, the team's leading scorer, and a slew of quick guards could make things difficult for Mercy.

The game could also prove to be a preview of this year's Class AA championship.



Linda Dow Hayes/Courier-Journal

Mercy's Catherine Robinson goes up for a shot in a maze of players.

In non-league action from last week, Amy Reynders and Tammy Rice had 16 points apiece as host Aquinas whipped Franklin, 59-41 on Tuesday, Jan. 31.

Over in Class C, Geneva DeSales has won four out of its last five games after beating both South Seneca and Dundee last week.

Against visiting South Seneca, Danielle Boncaro (14 points) and Becky Broomfield (13 points) combined for 27 points as the Saints (6-6, 9-9) won, 44-30. DeSales led 27-15. The win completed a two-game sweep of South



Driving to the basket is Mercy's Julie Buntich, who attempts to score on the play during the Thursday night, Feb. 2, game. Sandwiching her in are Cardinal Mooney's Liz Furey (32) and Shannon Barry (15). Buntich scored 18 points in the game, helping her team to a 51-42 victory.

Seneca this season. The Saints prevailed 46-30 in the first meeting back on Jan. 5.

Against visiting Dundee on Tuesday, Jan. 31, DeSales used a tenacious defense to win, 39-38. Dundee beat DeSales 55-42 in the first meeting between the two schools last December.

Broomfield led DeSales with 17 points. Boncaro contributed 14 points.

Muzzi attributed his team's turnaround to its patience on offense and its ability to play solid defense.

"We're moving the ball around a lot more now," Muzzi said. "Beating a team like Dundee is really going to help our confidence."

Unlike DeSales, the Notre Dame girls' basketball team is coming off a tough week, as the Crusaders (4-7 league, 10-9 overall) dropped back-to-back games to Elmira Free Academy and Corning West.

Against EFA on Friday, Feb. 3, the Crusaders were able to keep Samantha David under wraps, but the senior went wild in the second half to propel her team to a 51-34 win over ND.

David was held to six points in the first half, but scored 19 of her team's 31 points in the second half to finish with 25. EFA had led by just two points, 20-18 at the half.

"We threw all kinds of defenses at them in the first half, and things seemed to be going pretty well," Sobkowski said. "But we just couldn't stop her in the second half. Everything she threw up went in."

Kathy Lynch led ND with eight points and repeatedly managed to break any pressure ap-

plied by EFA.

In what Sobkowski said was his team's most game of the season, Corning West drubbed visiting ND, 53-38, on Tuesday, Jan. 31.

ND trailed 6-2 after the first quarter and 20-12 at intermission. CW ballooned the lead to 41-28 after three quarters.

Julie Cox led Notre Dame with 15 points. Jenny Fagan finished with 10. CW was able to shut down Lynch, who finished with four points.

With the sectional seedings due out this week, Sobkowski figures his Crusaders will be ranked "anywhere from fourth to seventh" with Odesa-Montour, Whitney Point and Greene garnering the top spots.

Advertisement

AQ icemen still perfect in league play

For the second consecutive year, the Aquinas hockey team is the class of the Monroe County Hockey League.

Rich Gamble's Little Irish, who are 16-0 in league games thus far, slew two more opponents last week by combined scores of 19-4. AQ has already clinched a berth in this year's state hockey tournament.

Gamble's icemen, who fell 8-2 against an experienced Rome Free Academy team in the state tourney last winter, can become just the fourth undefeated and untied hockey team in the league's 21 years of existence if they defeat Irondequoit (Feb. 9) and Greece (Feb. 11) this week. If Gamble's club can take both games and win the sectional title, it will avoid having to face RFA in an early-round tournament game this March.

The Little Irish have been winning in impressive fashion this year, outscoring opponents by an awesome 135-25 total. A non-league loss to St. Joseph's of Buffalo over the Christmas break is all that separates AQ from a perfect season.

The high-powered offense has been led by junior forward Chris Fess, who broke Teal Fowler's 1985-86 goals record (42 goals) with two

goals against Greece during a 6-1 Aquinas win at Lakeshore Rinks on Thursday, Feb. 2. Fess scored three more times in a 13-3 victory over Pittsford on Saturday, Feb. 4, giving him 46 for the season.

Jeff Nuccitelli has been another offensive star for Aquinas. The junior right wing had four goals and two assists during the romp over Pittsford last weekend.

Defensively, the Little Irish are solid as well, and have been making life easier for outstanding goalie Bob Carello. The AQ netminder has a microscopic 1.59 goals against average, and has been spectacular when called upon.

Position rounds begin this week, as the Little Irish seek their second consecutive sectional championship.

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What college basketball team was the first undefeated NCAA champion? (Hint:1956)

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