

McQuaid vying to defend large-school title

By Richard A. Kiley
Staff writer

The seedings are out. Now let the games begin.

The boys' basketball tournaments in Section 5 and Section 4 began this week, and several diocesan teams appear to have the right stuff to win sectional patches.

The race for the Section 5 Class A title is wide open after some surprising turn of events late in the regular season. A month ago it looked like Franklin was the clear favorite, but a resounding 89-74 loss to East last week has fueled the hopes of the top eight seeds in Class A.

For the second consecutive year, Webster (18-2) was named the top seed at the 18th annual seeding luncheon on Friday, Feb. 10. Following Bill O'Rourke's Warriors is Rush-Henrietta (16-3), Fairport (17-3), East (16-3) and Franklin (15-4). The Quakers' only loss on the court this season was to East; off the court, Trent Jackson's club forfeited three wins for using an ineligible player.

The sixth seed in Class A is McQuaid (12-6), which has won the large-school championship two consecutive years. Joe Marchese and his Knights have to be smiling a little bit this time around with the pressure and the attention on higher-seeded Monroe Fairport and City-Catholic League teams like East and Franklin.

The Knights can't be counted out. Since losing to Edison (without dominating 6-8 center Drew Henderson) back on Jan. 13, McQuaid has won six consecutive games—including a convincing 64-54 win over No. 2 East two weeks ago. Henderson and guard Reggie Wade have big-game experience, and Marchese is as clever as they come on the sidelines.

The task awaiting McQuaid is tough, but it could be worse. If they get by cross-town rival and 11th-seeded Brighton (10-10) on Wednesday, Feb. 15, the Knights would do battle with No. 3 Fairport this Saturday, Feb. 18, in a rematch of the 1987 Class AAA final.

Second-seeded Rush looms as a possible semifinal opponent if McQuaid makes it that far, but that is getting way ahead of ourselves.

The other bracket — consisting of Webster, Rush, East and Franklin — would have been a lot rougher on the Knights. That's the reason why 13th-seeded Cardinal Mooney (8-11) probably won't last long in this year's Class A tourney.

Ed Nietopski's Cards opened up at East on Tuesday, Feb. 14. Mooney was able to pull off an upset over Franklin in the tournament last year, but it appears very unlikely that the Cards will be able to do the same against the stacked Orientals.

Newark (19-1) appears the prohibitive favorite to take the crown in Class BB, but

a number of excellent teams in this classification might have something to say about that. The Reds are followed by Pittsford Mendon (17-3), Greece Arcadia (16-4) and Aquinas (13-7).

The fourth-seeded Little Irish have endured yet another season battling the larger A schools in the City-Catholic League, and have some of the tools needed to pull off some big sectional wins.

AQ opened up against 13th-seeded Churchville-Chili (1-19) on Tuesday, Feb. 14, and should have advanced to play the winner of the game between No. 5 Pittsford Sutherland (12-8) and No. 12 Eastridge (4-16). Aquinas handled Sutherland easily in a tournament-win earlier this season, but the Knights are surely improved.

If the Little Irish get by Churchville-Chili and Sutherland, they would have to play the top-seeded Reds in the semis.

Bishop Kearney (6-12) drew the ninth seed in Class BB. Mike Ruff's Kings played No. 8 Victor (8-12) on Tuesday, Feb. 14, and would have to play Newark this Friday, Feb. 17, if they got by the Blue Devils.

Over in Class D, Rushford (15-3) earned the top seed with Prattsburg (16-4) second. Geneva DeSales (13-7) is the third seed and played No. 14 Cohocton (3-17) at Naples on Wednesday, Feb. 15.

If the Saints, who closed out the regular season with two resounding wins over Romulus and Dundee, beat Cohocton they would play the winner of the game between No. 6 Northstar (11-7) and No. 11 Belmont (8-10) at a site to be determined on Saturday, Feb. 18.

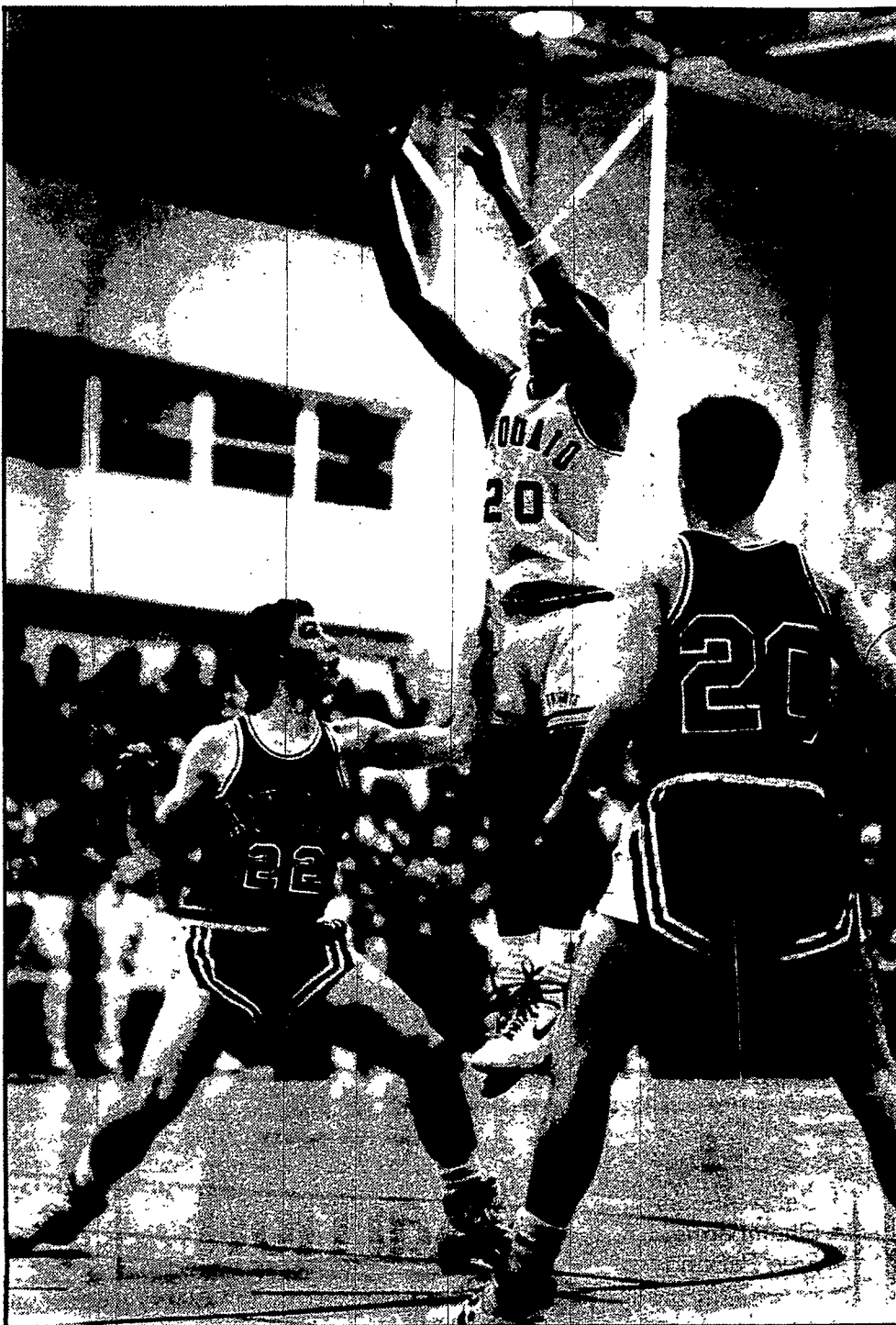
Tony Alvaro's club is a strong dark horse, if a team can be considered one as a No. 3 seed. The Saints may take their aggressions of not winning the Finger Lakes West title — like many picked them to do — out on some of their sectional opponents.

In Section 4 Class C, Elmira Notre Dame (8-12) has earned the No. 6 seed, behind No. 1 Whitney Point (19-0), No. 2 Trumansburg (16-3), No. 3 Walton (16-4), No. 4 Candor (15-4) and No. 5 Lansing (14-5).

Mike Johnston's Crusaders are coming off a 62-61 win over Horseheads — a team they lost to earlier in the season — and have been playing well the second half of the season.

ND opened up against No. 11 Moravia (10-9) at home on Tuesday, Feb. 14, and with a win would advance to the quarterfinals against the winner of No. 3 Walton and No. 14 Newark Valley.

The Crusaders were 3-0 this season against Class C competition, including two wins over second-seeded Trumansburg.



Linda Dow Hayes/Catholic Courier
McQuaid's Reggie Wade (20) brings big-game experience to the Section 5 Class A Boys Basketball Tournament.

Monarchs gain top seed

By Richard A. Kiley
Staff writer

Our Lady of Mercy has been tabbed the top seed in Class A of the 17th annual Section 5 girls' basketball tournament. Kathy Boughton's Monarchs earned the honor by means of a tie-breaker (higher winning percentage) over No. 2 Brockport.

The Blue Devils (18-2) were the only team to beat Mercy (19-1) during the regular season, but they had to go to overtime to do it. Brockport won the championship game of its host tourney, 68-64, over Mercy last Saturday, Feb. 11. That game may have provided a preview of the Class A championship.

Mercy began tournament play against No. 16 Gates-Chili (2-17) at Greece Athena on Tuesday, Feb. 14. A win over the Spartans would put the Monarchs in the quarterfinals against the winner of the game between No. 8 Canandaigua (12-7) and No. 9 Edison (10-9).

The highest seed in Mercy's bracket is No. 4 Fairport (14-4), which the Monarchs beat easily, 58-42, last Wednesday, Feb. 8. Mercy led 40-17 at the half, although Fairport was without leading-scorer Sarah Bouley.

Boughton was also honored as Class A Coach of the Year during the seeding luncheon on Monday, Feb. 13.

Three diocesan teams are seeded among 11 teams in Class BB. Cardinal Mooney (17-3) is the second seed behind No. 1 Pittsford Mendon (20-0).

Other diocesan teams competing in Class BB are No. 4 Bishop Kearney (12-8) and No. 7 Aquinas (11-9). Nazareth was among three teams — Wilson and Pittsford Sutherland were the others — to turn down an invitation as the No. 12 seed.

Mooney, which draws a first-round bye, will play the winner of the showdown be-

tween seventh-seeded Aquinas and 10th-seeded Eastridge. The game between Mooney and AQ/Eastridge will be played at Mooney Saturday, Feb. 18. The game is scheduled for 7 p.m.

Dan Bates' Little Irish are coming off a strong showing in the Webster Tournament. After beating the host Warriors, 53-49, in the first game of the tourney, Aquinas took Mendon to the limit before losing 51-37. AQ trailed 25-21 at the half, and led throughout much of the second half.

Bishop Kearney draws a first-round bye and will play No. 5 Wayne on Saturday, Feb. 18. Wayne drew a bye after no team accepted the No. 12 seed.

IN CLASS D, Geneva DeSales (9-11) is seeded sixth behind No. 1 Whitesville (18-1), No. 2 Houghton (11-4), No. 3 Greenwood (14-5), No. 4 Prattsburg (13-7) and No. 5 Friendship (11-8).

Steve Muzzi's Saints opened up tournament play at DeSales on Wednesday, Feb. 15, against No. 11 Northstar (2-16). A win over Northstar would put DeSales in the quarterfinals against third-seeded Greenwood on Saturday, Feb. 18.

IN SECTION 4 CLASS C, Elmira Notre (10-10) is the seventh seed behind No. 1 Odessa-Montour (19-0), No. 2 Walton (15-3), No. 3 Whitney Point (13-5), No. 4 Candor (14-4), No. 5 Sydney (13-6) and No. 6 Delhi (16-3).

Jeff Sobkowski's Crusaders, who began tournament play at home on Tuesday, Feb. 14, against No. 10 Lansing (12-7), suffered a serious loss before the tournament even began. Junior point guard Kathy Lynch, ND's playmaker and leading scorer, broke her hand following the Crusaders' 43-30 loss to Horseheads on Tuesday, Feb. 7. She will miss the entire post-season.

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All entries must be received within seven days of this paper's issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following each drawing.

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