

Mercy, ND continue domination over league

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

William Shakespeare once wrote, "The quality of mercy is not strained."

The Our Lady of Mercy basketball team is making the Bard look like a prophet this season, as the Monarchs have had to strain very little in roaring to a 7-0 start.

Mercy's latest wins came in the second annual Mercy Tournament at Nazareth College, where the Monarchs trounced league rival Aquinas, 55-28, in a first round game Friday, Jan. 5, then dominated Clarence of Section 6, 66-29, in the title game Jan. 6.

Against Aquinas (6-3), the Monarchs were led by Mary Beth Cleary's 14 points. Catherine Robinson and Kim Caccamise each added 12.

Aquinas' Amy Reynders tossed in 10 points in the losing effort.

Little Irish coach Dan Bates said his team managed to stay close to the Monarchs in the first half, trailing at one point in the second quarter by only four points, 20-16. Reynders, meanwhile, scored eight of her points in the first quarter.

But then Mercy applied its press, shut down Reynders, and scored the last six points of the half.

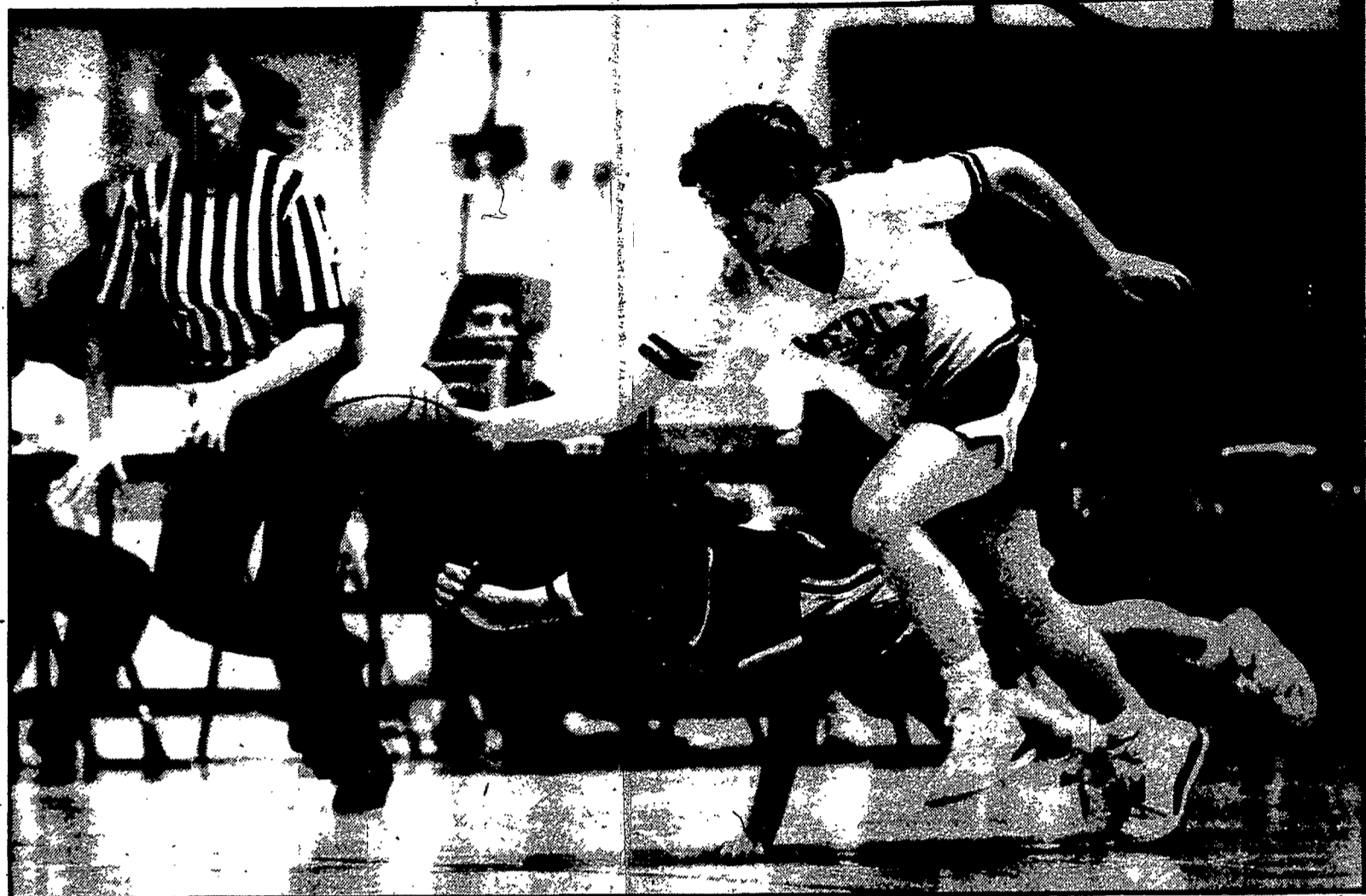
Clarence (7-1) suffered its first loss of the season in the championship match-up; and the Mercy press was again a factor.

With two minutes left in the first quarter, and Mercy clinging to a 9-7 lead, coach Kathy Boughton called her team to press. Clarence was unable to score a point in the second quarter, while Mercy tossed in 19 points to put the game out of reach.

Cleary again paced the Monarchs, scoring 17 points while Sheila Doyle chipped in with 14.

Earlier in the week, the Monarchs easily handled league rival and visiting Nazareth 74-21 on Jan. 2. Robinson took scoring honors as she poured in 19 points. She also snared 11 rebounds. Doyle combined 18 points with eight steals.

Nazareth (0-3, 3-5) was led by Missy Creamer, who fired in two three-pointers



Babette G. Augustin-Staff photographer

Aquinas' Mary Radford makes a desperate lunge for the ball as Mercy's Mary Beth Cleary drives down court during the opening round of the Mercy Tournament on Friday, Jan. 5 at Nazareth College. Mercy won the game 55-28, then defeated Clarence of Section 6, 66-29, for the title on Jan. 6.

on her way to a 10-point game.

All five Mercy starters are averaging in double figures through seven games, led by Robinson and Cleary with 14 ppg. Doyle is averaging 12 points and six steals a game.

Boughton pointed out that because of her team's scoring balance, opponents can't key on just one or two players. And the Monarchs' speed and athletic ability enable them to outrun almost any opponent on both offense and defense.

So can anyone stop them?

The answer may become clearer after the

Monarchs play host to Notre Dame of Utica — the 12th ranked team in the state — on Jan. 12.

Fairport, which gave the Monarchs their toughest game of the season before falling 55-49 on Dec. 27, will journey to the Blossom Road campus on Jan. 17.

In addition, Boughton said both Aquinas and Kearney have good programs, and either team is capable of beating Mercy.

Mercy was scheduled to travel to Franklin on Monday, Jan. 8.

Except for its loss to Mercy, Aquinas had a good week — against Penfield.

On Jan. 3, the Little Irish beat host Penfield 40-36. Aquinas trailed throughout most of the game, and were still down 30-27 at the end of the third quarter. The Little Irish finally took the lead with just four minutes to go, outscoring Penfield 13-6 in the fourth quarter.

Reynders led Aquinas with 20 points with 11 of those coming in the fourth quarter.

Aquinas and Penfield squared off again in the consolation game of the Mercy Tournament, and the results were basically the same: a 44-33 Little Irish win. Reynders tossed in 17 points and Jill Banaszewski added 11.

Aquinas' next game is at home against Bishop Kearney on Thursday, Jan. 11.

Bishop Kearney (2-1, 8-2) ended 1989 with a tournament win, and began the new year with a couple of convincing victories.

Paul Forte's Kings won the Eastridge Tournament with an opening-round, 50-31 win over Irondequoit on Wednesday, Dec. 27, then crushed the host team, 54-32, the following night for the title.

Marisa Shackelford, who won tournament most valuable player honors, scored 15 points against Irondequoit, and combined 10 points and eight rebounds against Eastridge.

Eileen Jensen, who was named to the all-tournament team, led Kearney with 22 points and 11 rebounds in the title game.

Kearney played host to Nazareth on Jan. 4, downing their guests 59-31. Dawn Weigand led the Kings with 15 points and 15 rebounds. Kathy Doran took scoring honors for Nazareth, tossing in 11 points.

The Kings welcomed Irondequoit (1-8) Jan. 5 and again played rude hosts in trouncing their visitors, 56-34.

Sandy Supple and Shackelford both scored 12 points. Jensen had 10 points and



Babette G. Augustin-Staff photographer

Mercy center Natalie White attempts to go up for a shot, but finds Aquinas' Amy Reynders blocking the way.

11 rebounds.

Despite his team losing to both Mercy and Kearney in the past week, Nazareth coach Walt Gordinier sees some positive signs for his team.

Nazareth had trouble scoring last season, averaging only in the low 20s each game. This year, Gordinier's team is averaging closer to 30 points a game. In addition, Nazareth is finding new offensive weapons.

Kathy Doran continues to lead the team in scoring with 10 ppg. But Creamer tossed in 10 points against Mercy, and another 10 during a 46-38 loss to St. John the Baptist of West Islip in the title game of the Nazareth Tournament on Dec. 30.

And in her team's opening-round, 43-25 victory over Harley-Allendale-Columbia, Nazareth sophomore Lenore Suraci collected 12 points, nine rebounds and six blocked shots.

Nazareth was scheduled to travel to Pittsford Sutherland Jan. 8.

Another team starting to turn things

Continued on page 11

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