

Mercy wins title, stays undefeated

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

Our Lady of Mercy continued its quest for an undefeated season and the top seed in the Section 5 girls' Class A basketball tournament, as the Monarchs won their third consecutive Private-Parochial League title by beating Bishop Kearney last week.

Notre Dame, meanwhile, won twice to clinch at least a tie for the Sullivan Trail Conference crown.

Mercy (5-0, 17-0) entered its Feb. 8 game against visiting Bishop Kearney (4-2, 15-3) handicapped by the loss of point guard Mary Beth Cleary, who recently tore ankle ligaments.

By the end of the first quarter, the Monarchs were further hampered when defensive stalwart Sheila Doyle sat down because of foul trouble.

Coach Kathy Boughton was forced to juggle her lineup, and even resorted to playing power-forward Catherine Robinson at guard.

Without Robinson underneath — where she gives the Monarchs rebounding and scoring punch — the Monarchs couldn't shake Kearney. The Kings trailed 17-14 at the end of the first quarter, and 28-23 at the half — only after a desperation three-pointer at the buzzer by Mercy's Kim Caccamise (12 points).

Doyle was reinserted into the lineup at the 3:21 mark of the third quarter with the Monarchs leading 32-29. Before she fouled out with 1:45 left in the game, Mercy opened up a 55-39 advantage.

During that span, Robinson returned to her natural position and scored 13 of her game-high 21 points.

Meanwhile, Mercy's defense keyed on Kearney's leading scorers, Eileen Jensen and Marisa Shackelford. Jensen finished with six points while Shackelford had 14. Mary Wideman provided added scoring for the Kings, tossing in 11 points before she was slowed by a strained hamstring in the fourth quarter.

Earlier in the week, Mercy downed visiting East 80-40 behind Doyle's career-high 26 points. Natalie White added 15 points, and Robinson had 14 in the Feb. 6 game.

Mercy was scheduled to host Aquinas Feb. 13, before playing in the Brockport Tournament Feb. 16-17. In last year's



Babette G. Augustin-Staff photographer
Kearney's Marisa Shackelford (center) found herself surrounded by Monarchs most of the game.



Babette G. Augustin-Staff photographer
Mercy's Catherine Robinson (left) shows the intensity that helped her compile 21 points, nine rebounds and five steals during the Monarchs' 55-41 victory over visiting Bishop Kearney on Feb. 8.

championship game, Brockport handed the Monarchs their only loss of the regular season.

With a 14-4 record this season, Brockport appears to have a chance to do it again.

Even if Mercy loses this week, the Monarchs will most likely have the top seed in girls' Class A. And Boughton predicted that Cleary, who is scheduled to get her cast removed Feb. 15, will be ready to play when the sectionals begin next week.

Kearney won its only other game of the week, defeating host Nazareth (7-10) 68-30 on Feb. 6. Shackelford led the Kings' scoring with 16 points. Kathy Pero had 13.

Kearney was scheduled to host Livonia Feb. 12. Shackelford entered the game just four points shy of 1,000 for her high school career.

The Kings will end regular-season play against visiting Rush-Henrietta. Victories this week will ensure the Kings one of the top four seeds in Class B.

In its lone game of the week, Aquinas (11-6) suffered a 51-46 loss to visiting Wayne (12-5) on Feb. 10. The game was close throughout, as the score was knotted, 21-21, at the half. But Wayne hit some key foul shots in the fourth quarter to pull out the game.

Amy Reynders led Aquinas with 18 points. Tammy Rice contributed 11 points.

After playing Mercy, Aquinas was scheduled to play in the Webster Tournament Feb. 16-17. The Little Irish's first-round opponent is Pittsford Mendon (14-3). Aquinas still has a shot at being one of the top four seeds in Class BB.

McQuaid, East battle for title; DeSales falls short

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

As sectionals drew closer, the last full week of regular-season play saw McQuaid priming for a game that could decide the City-Catholic League championship and DeSales fall short in its bid for the Finger Lakes West title.

McQuaid was scheduled to play East Tuesday, Feb. 13. An East win would give the Orientals the league title. A win by the Knights (16-3) would mean a tie for the league title, and the satisfaction of knowing that they had handed the Orientals (17-2) their only losses against Section 5 teams.

The Knights beat East 77-59 on Dec. 22 at McQuaid.

McQuaid, however, will enter the second contest with 6-10 center Jason

Nazareth (7-10) has already bettered last season's record, and appears poised for a sectional bid. After its loss to Kearney on Feb. 6, Nazareth rebounded with a 55-24 win over visiting Northstar (1-11). Missy Creamer and Kathy Doran each scored 11 points.

Nazareth was scheduled to visit Wilson on Feb. 12. If sectional play began this week, Nazareth would be seeded ninth in Class BB.

In Geneva, the flu bug hit the DeSales Saints (6-6, 8-9) hard. More specifically, it struck point guard Danielle Boncaro, who played one game under the weather and then sat out two games due to the illness. The results were two losses and a narrow win.

On Feb. 5, DeSales lost to host Geneva 63-51. The Saints fell behind 18-7 after the first quarter and were never able to catch up. Krista DeVaney took team-scoring honors with 19 points. Boncaro and Jeaneane Donahue scored 13 and 12 points, respectively.

Sans Boncaro the following night, the Saints were upset by Romulus 62-54. DeVaney scored 20 points, and Donahue collected 19 points, 11 rebounds and six steals in the losing effort.

The Saints played better against host Red Jacket on Feb. 8, beating the Indians 48-44. Trailing 16-7 at the end of the first quarter, the Saints (minus Boncaro) rallied to outscore their hosts 16-8 in the second quarter and 25-20 in the second half to pull out the win.

Donahue scored 10 of her team-high 17 points in third quarter. DeVaney, playing point guard in place of Boncaro, tossed in

15 points.

The Saints were slated to visit Naples Feb. 14. Before that game, DeSales was ranked ninth in seeding points for Class D.

In Section IV, Elmira Notre Dame (10-1, 16-3) went into its Feb. 13 game against visiting Horseheads with a chance to clinch the Sullivan Trail Conference title, and the top seed in the Class C tournament.

Horseheads handed Notre Dame its only league loss of the season on Jan. 12.

Last week, the Crusaders tuned up for the rematch by squeaking past visiting Corning West 39-32 on Feb. 6, and trouncing host Hornell 55-24 on Feb. 8.

Defense was the key to both games, noted coach Jeff Sobkowski.

Against West, the Crusaders forced 26 turnovers — 19 coming in the first half. Notre Dame limited the visitors to just 10 points in the half.

Unfortunately, Notre Dame's offense — which Sobkowski said was rusty after a three-week layoff — could muster only 15 points of its own, keeping the game close until the end. Julie Cox (12 points) and Cara Cleveland (10) led the Crusader attack.

The Crusader defense excelled again at Hornell on Feb. 8, limiting the Red Raiders to five first-quarter points. The Red Raiders had just 15 points at the half.

The Crusader offense, meanwhile, successfully shook off its rust and put 20 points on the board in the first quarter alone.

Kathy Lynch tallied 18 points, and Cleveland had 12 during a game in which every Notre Dame player scored.

McKinney ailing. McKinney has been plagued by the flu, and has lost 22 pounds since the beginning of the season.

Coach Joe Marchese was so concerned about his big man's stamina that he played him sparingly during a 74-54 rout of visiting Edison on Feb. 9.

Fortunately for Marchese, McQuaid didn't need McKinney against the Inventors, as the Knights hit from the outside — including 10 three-pointers. Ted Naylor (15 points) and Mike Montesano (nine points) led the trifecta barrage, pouring in three each. Point guard Kevin Brown (13 points) hit two three-pointers, and Pat Clifford scored all six of his points from three-point land.

Jay Moore dumped in 14 points with many of those coming inside.

The Knights took control of the game early, building a 46-27 halftime lead. The huge margin allowed Marchese to play his reserves much of the second half.

DeSales (11-4, 13-5) began the week on a high note, beating Bloomfield (9-4, 11-6) 48-43 on Feb. 5 to keep alive the Saints' slim hopes of winning the Finger Lakes West League title.

Those hopes ended with an 83-66 shellacking at the hands of host Honeoye (12-1, 15-2) on Feb. 7.

The key to the two games was the Saints' defense, according to Coach Tony Alvaro.

"I think we played excellent defense (against Bloomfield)," Alvaro remarked.

The coach could not say the same after the Honeoye game.

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