

Saints seek to hold title; ND favored

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

The second season has begun.

Post-season play in both Sections 4 and 5 has started for diocesan boys' basketball teams, with four separate titles up for grabs.

DeSales (14-5) is the defending Section 5 Class D champion, but the fourth-seeded Saints will find it hard to repeat.

The Saints have been hurt by the decision of two standout players — seniors Jeff Taney and Chris Ike — to quit just before sectional play began. According to DeSales Coach Tony Alvaro, both players left for personal reasons.

Taney and Ike combined for more than 22 points a game during the regular season, and the void created by their decision to leave the team will put a dent in the Saints' offense.

Even more potentially damaging to the Saints' chances, however, is an injury to center and leading-scorer Bob McFadden. In DeSales' last game of the regular season, a 93-49 romp over visiting Romulus on Feb. 13, McFadden broke a finger on his shooting hand.

Alvaro said that McFadden — who was tabbed Most Valuable Player in last year's Class D tournament — will be able to play. It is yet to be seen, however, how the injury will affect McFadden's shooting.

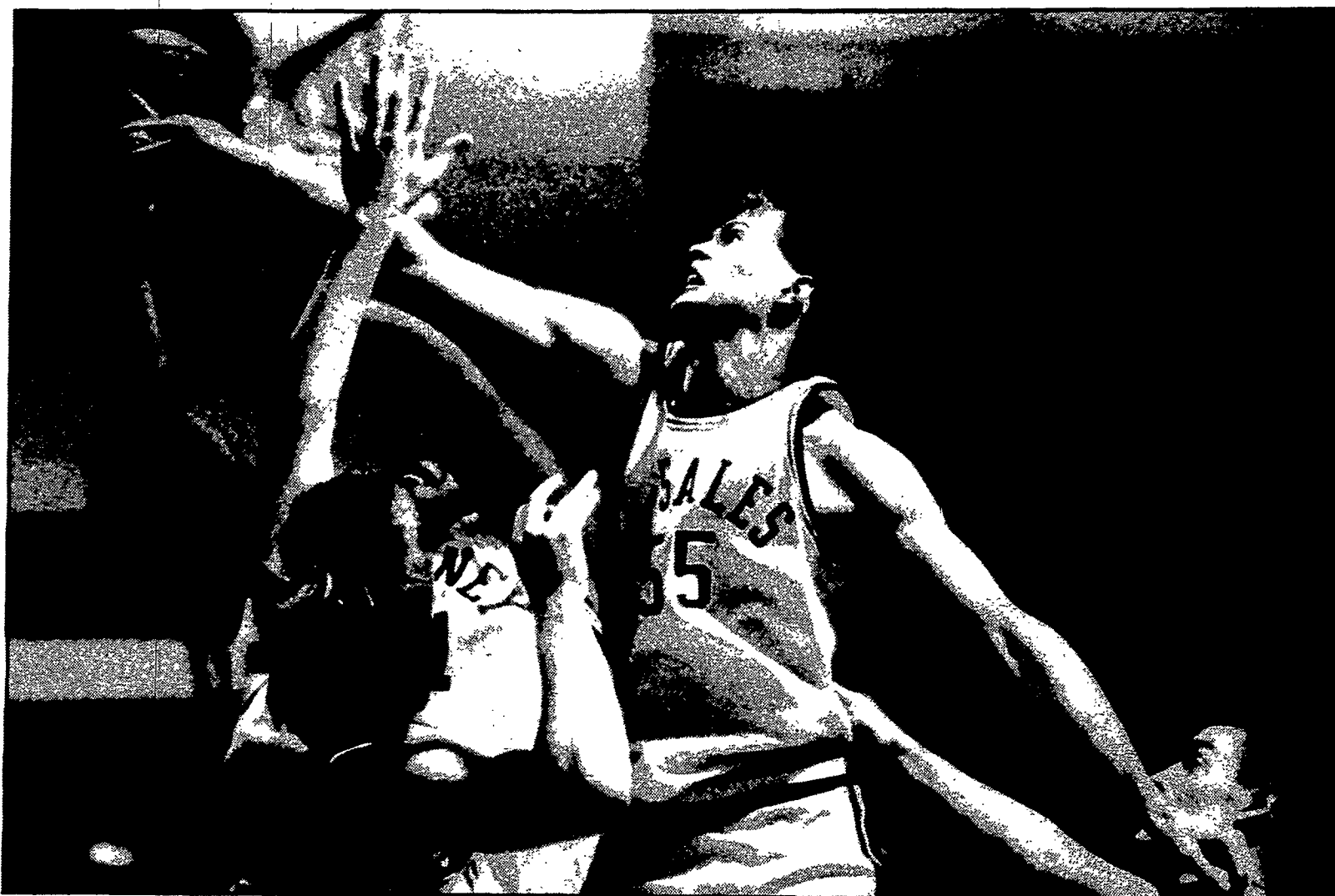
Entering the sectionals, the Saints have only eight players on the roster. Three of those players were just called up from the junior varsity team.

Ed Marsteiner has been a three-point threat all season long for the Saints, and Pat Mooney, Jim McDermott, and Todd Hardy are all capable of scoring.

The Saints must win in a tough bracket, however, and they could face top-seeded Prattsburg (18-2) in the semifinals.

DeSales was scheduled to begin sectional play Feb. 20 against No. 13 Canesaraga (7-12) at Naples.

During the last week of regular-season



DeSales is hoping that 6-6 Bob McFadden (55) — the Saints' leading scorer and rebounder, and last year's Class D Most Valuable Player — will be able to overcome a broken finger and lead the team as it attempts to defend its Section 5 Class D crown. DeSales is this year's fourth seed.

Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer

play in the City-Catholic League, Aquinas (15-5) tuned up for sectional play with a 58-49 win over host Bishop Kearney (8-11) on Feb. 13.

The two Catholic schools could meet again in the finals of Class BB, where Aquinas earned a third seed and Kearney was seeded ninth.

But a few roadblocks stand in the way.

The Little Irish (15-5), who are led by last year's Section 5 BB tournament MVP Alcindor Coleman, find themselves in the same bracket as second-seeded Newark (18-2) — a possible semifinal-round opponent.

First, however, Aquinas must get by 14th-seeded Wayne (6-14) in an opening-round game scheduled for Feb. 20 at Webster. If the Little Irish advance to the

second round Feb. 23, they will face the winner of the game between No. 6 Greece Arcadia (12-8) and 11th-seeded Batavia (7-13).

Aquinas has been playing well of late and — except for some bumps and bruises sustained in a physical game against Kearney — is in good shape physically.

Kearney also has been playing well lately, but it has the misfortune of competing in the same bracket as top-seeded Pittsford Mendon (18-2). If the Kings advance to the quarterfinals, they will have to play Mendon.

In first-round play, Kearney is scheduled to play eighth-seeded Brighton (10-10) Feb. 20 at Greece Athena. The Kings have balanced scoring and a tenacious defense that gives opponents headaches.

But Kearney is also prone to making turnovers and fouling too often. If the Kings can keep the games close, however, they have a chance to pull some upsets.

If McQuaid (16-4) gets to the Class A finals, it might be considered an upset of sorts. Barring any mishaps along the way, the fourth-seeded Knights will have to eventually play top-seeded East (18-2) in the semifinals Feb. 28.

The two City-Catholic League foes split this year, with McQuaid winning 77-59 at home in December, and losing 81-79 at East on Feb. 14 in the regular-season finale for both squads.

McQuaid, however, better not get caught looking ahead to a rubber game against the Orientals. The Knights were

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Monarchs, Crusaders secure top seeds in sectionals

By Lee Strong
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The girls' basketball teams at Our Lady of Mercy and Notre Dame capped successful regular seasons by gaining the top seeds in their respective sectionals.

In addition, Bishop Kearney and Aquinas earned high seeds, giving diocesan schools legitimate shots at four sectional titles.

In Section 5 Class A, Mercy (18-1) earned a first-round bye as the first seed.

The Monarchs can use the extra rest, as two key players continue to recover from ailments.

Point-guard Mary Beth Cleary had been sidelined by torn ankle ligaments for several weeks. The cast was removed Feb. 15, but she has not yet been able to practice.

Meanwhile, forward Natalie White has been hobbled in the past few games by a strained Achilles tendon.

Mercy's chances to successfully defend its Class A crown will depend on how well Cleary and White are able to play.

Mercy's lone loss of the season came Feb. 13 while Cleary was out of action and White was limited because of her injury. Visiting Aquinas capitalized on the Monarchs' handicap, winning 68-56.

The other top seeds in Class A are Fairport (second-seeded), Brockport (third), and Greece Athena (fourth).

The Monarchs have already beaten Fairport twice in close contests. They also nipped Brockport, 62-58, in the finals of

the Brockport Tournament, Feb. 17.

Against Brockport, senior Catherine Robinson, Mercy's leading scorer and rebounder, poured in 20 points. The Monarchs will be looking to Robinson, Sheila Doyle and Kim Caccamise to put points on the board in the sectionals.

Mercy is scheduled to play the winner of the Feb. 21 game between eighth-seeded Canandaigua and ninth-seeded Edison at a site yet to be determined.

Aquinas (13-7) didn't have long to savor its win over Mercy. On Feb. 16 they fell to Pittsford Mendon 44-35 in the first round of the Webster Tournament. The Little Irish rebounded from the loss the following night by beating Greece Olympia 45-31 in the consolation round.

The Irish may have to face Mendon again in the semifinals of the Class BB tournament, as fourth-seeded Aquinas is in the same bracket as top-seeded Mendon.

Amy Reynders leads the Little Irish in scoring. She registered a career-high 32 points in the win over Mercy. Jill Banaszewski and Tammy Rice also pose scoring threats.

Aquinas has a first-round bye, and is scheduled to play at a site not determined as of *Catholic Courier* presstime this Saturday against the winner of the Feb. 21 contest between fifth-seeded Wayne and 12th-seeded Pittsford Sutherland.

Bishop Kearney (17-3) also earned a first-round bye, after the Kings claimed the third seed in Class B. Penn Yan is the top seed, Wellsville is second, and Attica earned the fourth seed.

The Kings ended their regular season

with wins over visiting Livonia (52-38 on Feb. 12) and visiting Rush-Henrietta (59-36 on Feb. 15).

Marisa Shackelford collected her 1,000th point as a high school player during the Livonia game. She leads the Kings in scoring, and, along with center Eileen Jensen, gives Kearney a strong inside game.

BK enters the sectionals at full strength with the return of point-guard Theresa Dudley, who was forced to sit on the sidelines for the past five weeks because of a stress fracture in her leg.

Nazareth (7-11) finds itself back in the sectionals after a six-year hiatus, earning the ninth-seed in Class BB.

The return may be short-lived, however. If Nazareth won its scheduled first-round game against host and eighth-seeded Batavia on Feb. 21, then it would have to play top-seeded Mendon.

Still, coach Walt Gordinier said his players are just happy to be in the sectionals again. Amy Doran is Nazareth's leading scorer, averaging 10 points per game.

The final week of regular-season play mirrored DeSales' up-and-down season. The Saints (10-10) beat host Naples 58-46 on Feb. 14; lost at home to Dundee, 39-35, on Feb. 16; then trounced visiting Hammondspoint 47-33 on Feb. 17.

After earning the ninth-seed in Class D, the Saints were scheduled to play eighth-seeded Batavia Notre Dame on Feb. 21 at Livonia High School.

DeSales enters the sectionals at full strength with point-guard Danielle Bon-

caro recovered from the flu. Boncaro, Jeaneane Donahue and Krista DeVaney provide the bulk of the Saints' scoring.

In Section 4, Elmira Notre Dame (16-5) earned the top seed in Class C.

But that seeding did little to ease the pain of losing the Sullivan Trail Conference title to Horseheads, according to ND coach Jeff Sobkowski.

The Crusaders fell to visiting Horseheads 39-34 on Feb. 13 to produce a tie for the title between the two teams.

That loss set up a playoff game for the title at Southside High School on Feb. 16. ND lost again to the Raiders, this time 51-42.

In that game, the Crusaders may also have lost Cara Cleveland, one of their top scorers, who suffered a severely sprained ankle. Her status is day-to-day, but Sobkowski hopes that the first-round bye the Crusaders earn as the top seed will give her enough time to heal sufficiently to play.

Notre Dame will need Cleveland back if the Crusaders are to win the title in a tough class. The second seed is Odessa (18-1), third seed is Delhi (17-2) and fourth seed is Sidney (15-3). In addition, the fifth-seeded team is Dryden, which handed Notre Dame a 39-31 loss last month.

The Crusaders were scheduled to begin their quest for the Class C title with a Feb. 24 game against the winner of the Feb. 21 contest between eighth-seeded Moravia and ninth-seeded Greene.

The site of the game had not been determined at presstime.