

End of the road for diocesan girls' hoop teams

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

Post-season play involving diocesan girls' basketball teams ended with Our Lady of Mercy and Aquinas falling in the finals, and Bishop Kearney losing in the semifinals.

Mercy's Catherine Robinson did her best to earn Mercy a second consecutive Class A title. In the Class A finals at Roberts Wesleyan College on March 2, she scored 39 points — 20 of them in a little more than four minutes.

Robinson also tied a state record for points scored by a high school girl in one quarter (19). In addition, Robinson's seven three-pointers tied her for fourth in the United States for the number of "treys" scored by a high school girl in one game.

For her efforts, Robinson was named the Class A Most Valuable Player.

But the Mercy senior's heroics were not enough, as the top-seeded Monarchs (20-2) fell to No. 3 Brockport, 78-71.

Robinson's scoring surge became necessary when the Monarchs found themselves in a desperate situation midway through the third quarter.

Brockport (18-5) scored the first 12 points of the game, built a 17-point lead by the half, and was up 58-38 with five minutes left in the third quarter when Mercy Coach Kathy Boughton called a timeout.

"I told them we had to start shooting (three-pointers) now or never," Boughton said.

Robinson, a senior forward, proceeded to score Mercy's next 20 points, hitting six three-pointers during the barrage. With 4:27 left in the game, Mercy had cut the lead to 65-57, but the Monarchs were unable to get any closer the rest of the way.

Boughton said that the Blue Devils were able to roar to their lead by dominating the offensive boards. Brockport's rebounding prowess enabled the Blue Devils to take



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer
Aquinas used defense, as shown here by Marci Meagher (right), to upset Mendon, 49-45, in the Section 5 Class BB semifinals at Edison on Feb. 28.

ND wins Class C title; McQ, DeSales fall

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

The boys' basketball team at Elmira Notre Dame claimed the Section 4 Class C crown, propelling the Crusaders into the state high school basketball tournament.

Meanwhile, in Section 5 play, McQuaid (Class A) and DeSales (Class D) both fell in the semifinals.

Top-seeded Notre Dame (17-7) advanced to the Class C finals for the second consecutive year.

Last year, the Crusaders lost to Whitney Point in the title game. This time around, they used a 33-8 run over the second and third quarters to ensure a 70-56 win over sixth-seeded Moravia at Broome County Arena in Binghamton on March 3.

Early in the game, Notre Dame received a scare as the Blue Devils built an 18-12 first-quarter lead. "(Moravia) came out shooting the lights out of the basket," Crusader Coach Mike D'Aloisio said.

But then the Crusaders' defense put out

those lights, mixing full-court and half-court pressure to hold Moravia (17-6) to just seven second-quarter points. With 1:28 left in the first half, Brian Sheehan (24 points) scored a basket to tie the game at 25, then hit a foul shot (he was 12-of-14 from the charity stripe for the game) to give the Crusaders the lead. Lee Heyward (six points) connected on two foul shots a few seconds later to up the lead to 28-25.

In the second half, the Crusaders continued to pull away, building a 49-37 lead at the end of the third quarter. ND coasted the rest of the way.

D'Aloisio said his team has jelled in recent weeks, peaking just in time for the sectionals. "We seem to be in sync, with everyone knowing what their role is," he remarked.

The first-year varsity coach noted that the return of Heyward and Rob Agan from early-season injuries has helped give the team the depth it needed.

Meanwhile, Sheehan, Mike Bennett

Rick Shaw (14 points in the title game) and Geoff Woodworth (12 points) have continued their scoring surge.

Bennett was especially hot in the Crusaders' 86-69 win over fourth-seeded Sherburne-Earleville in the Class C semifinals at the Broome County Arena on Feb. 27. The junior forward poured in 23 points — including four three-pointers. He also grabbed 11 rebounds.

Shaw chipped in 15 points, while Sheehan and Woodworth contributed 14 and 13 points respectively.

The Crusaders are scheduled to face the Section 3 Class C representative — either West Hill or Beaver River — at Colgate University on March 10.

A win would put Notre Dame into the Final Four of the state tournament.

More than 5,000 spectators gathered at the War Memorial Feb. 28 to watch the rubber match between fourth-seeded McQuaid (18-4) and top-seeded East (20-2) in

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multiple shots, and prevented the Monarchs from scoring easy, fast-break baskets off of defensive rebounds.

Natalie White was the only other Monarch to score in double figures, pumping in 16 points.

Mercy's Sheila Doyle joined Robinson on the Class-A all-tournament team. Usually a defensive specialist, Doyle led the Monarchs in scoring with 29 points during a 74-48 win over Greece Athena (15-7) in the semifinals at Edison on Feb. 27. Robinson collected 22 points and 11 rebounds in the game.

In the Section 5 Class BB finals at Brockport State College on March 3, Aquinas (15-8) fell short in its attempt to pull off yet another upset, falling 59-40 to Victor (20-3).

The fourth-seeded Little Irish advanced to the finals by upsetting top-seeded Mendon 49-45 at Edison on February 28. Aquinas developed a giant-killer reputation during the regular season after handing Mercy its first loss of the season.

In the sectional finals, however, second-seeded Victor proved too much for Aquinas. The Little Irish opted to play a physical, aggressive defense, and Victor responded by going 25-for-30 from the foul line.

Aquinas ran into foul trouble early, with Kathy Thies and Tammy Rice picking up three fouls each in the first five minutes of the game. They were forced to sit and watch much of the first half.

Sophomore Amy Reynders — picking up where she left off during the regular season — led the Irish with 16 points in the losing effort. She was named to the Class BB all-tournament squad.

This was also named to the all-tourney team. She played a key role in the Irish's upset win over Mendon.

Down 38-30 with five minutes left in the game, Aquinas went to a full-court press and tied the game, 45-45, with 1:47 left in the fourth quarter. Thies then stole the ball at midcourt, and raced for a basket to put the Irish up 47-45. Reynders (13 points) added two foul shots to ice the win. Jill Banaszewski added 11 points.

Bishop Kearney (18-4) also fell to a second-seed, losing to Wellsville 43-33 in the Class B semifinals at the Community College of the Finger Lakes on Feb. 28.

The third-seeded Kings kept the low-scoring contest close, trailing Wellsville (21-1) by only 19-17 at the half. But Wellsville, which outrebounded Kearney 35-21 for the game, took control in the second half.

Marisa Shackelford ended her high-school career by leading the Kings with 13 points.

Wellsville won the Class B title by beating Penn Yan, 49-40, at the State University of New York College at Geneseo on March 3.

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