

DeSales, ND clinch berths in sectionals

By Barbara Ann Homick
Staff writer

Two diocesan high school football teams continued stellar seasons last weekend by clinching sectional berths.

In Section 5 action, Geneva DeSales shocked unbeaten Clyde-Savannah, 9-7, on Oct. 27, to sew up a sectional bid. The Saints' win prevented the Golden Eagles from clinching a Class C playoff berth. Clyde entered the game with a state-high 23-game winning streak.

In Section 4 Division IV, Elmira Notre Dame locked up a post-season spot by nipping Dryden, 15-13.

Aquinas Institute still has a chance at a sectional berth after beating McQuaid, 14-8, in City-Catholic League play. Bishop Kearney succumbed to Greece Olympia, 41-0, for its sixth loss of the season.

Clyde-Savannah (5-1) entered its home game against DeSales (6-1) as the No. 1 ranked Class C-D team in the state, according to the latest New York Sports Writers Association Poll. That ranking will change this week after the Saints dropped the Golden Eagles, 9-7, on Oct. 27.

DeSales Coach Mark McCheyne said his Saints may have won more comfortably if injured star Jim McDermott had been able to play.

"But a win's a win," he quickly added.

John O'Neil's 33-yard field goal in the first quarter turned out to be the difference in the game, as he provided DeSales with its first points, 3-0.

John Conner's one-yard touchdown run in the second quarter gave DeSales a 9-0 bulge. O'Neil failed to add the extra-point, however, and the lead remained 9-0 at the break.

In the third quarter, Clyde's Tysean Harris scampered one yard for a touchdown, and the Golden Eagles secured the conversion to trim the Saints' lead to 9-7.

Jim Vedora helped ice the win with a 15-yard sack in the final quarter. The Saints' defense was able to hold Clyde scoreless the rest of the way.

DeSales was hurt by penalties on several occasions, including one five-yard and two 10-yard infractions. And even though the Saints controlled the ball offensively for most of the first half — DeSales ran 35



McQuaid running back Kullen Dickenson attempts to break through Aquinas' defensive line. Dickenson scored a 37-yard touchdown in the second quarter of the Knights' 14-8 loss to Aquinas Oct. 27.

Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer

plays to Clyde's 14 — the Golden Eagles' defense held the Saints to a mere 41 yards in the second half.

O'Neil collected more than 100 yards in total offense as he rushed the ball eight times for 75 yards and caught two passes for 26 yards. Quarterback Frank Pane Jr. was 7-for-13 for 68 yards, and he had one interception.

Defensively for DeSales, brothers Jim and Joe Vedora each had 11 tackles. Conner finished with nine tackles. Chris Braselton and Brian Askin had two sacks each.

McCheyne said many people predicted that Clyde would beat the Saints by 30 or 40 points. But the opening kickoff provided a good indication of how well the Saints were going to play when DeSales recovered a fumble, McCheyne said.

The Saints will look to win their seventh game of the season against visiting Romulus on Nov. 3.

In a big win against a senior-dominated team, Elmira Notre Dame (7-1) dropped visiting Dryden (6-2), 15-13, on Oct. 26.

In the first quarter of the Division IV game, Chris O'Herron gathered in a 46-yard touchdown pass from Bryan Wood-

worth. Pat Palmer's kick was good to give the Crusaders a 7-0 lead.

Quarterback Tracy George scored Dryden's first touchdown on a three-yard run in the second quarter. Mike Bennett then intercepted the two-point conversion pass, and the score remained, 7-6.

In the last seven minutes of the third quarter, Bennett capped off an 80-yard drive with a one-yard TD run. He also ran for the two-point conversion to increase the Crusaders' margin to 15-7.

At the eight-minute mark of the fourth quarter, the Purple Lions' Steve Stuttel rumbled three yards into the end zone for a score. Ben Wells added the PAT to make the score 15-13.

Bennett finished with 27 carries for 128 yards, and Bryan Woodworth was 7-for-14 passing for 116 yards.

Notre Dame's defense was led by Brian Sheehan (12 tackles) and Damian Saks (10 tackles).

The Crusaders travel to Waverly on Nov. 2, and although the Wolverines are (0-8) for the season, D'Aloisio said they are not a team to take lightly.

Back in Section 5, Aquinas (4-2) handled City-Catholic League rival McQuaid,

14-8, during the Little Irish's Homecoming game Oct. 27.

Jim Fischer helped spur Aquinas to victory when he intercepted a muffed field-goal attempt by McQuaid at the end of the first quarter. The play would come back to haunt the Knights.

The scoring began in the second quarter when McQuaid's Kullen Dickenson raced 37 yards for a touchdown. Dwight Walker ran for the two-point conversion to give the Knights an 8-0 lead.

Later in the same quarter, Fischer scored on a two-yard run. Mark Bilak received a pass from Joe Bianchi for two points to tie the game, 8-8, at intermission.

Matt Piccone scored what turned out to be the game-winning touchdown when he rumbled 63 yards for a score in the third quarter. Mike Sloan's extra-point was botched, and the Little Irish led 14-8.

In the final minutes of the game, AQ's Bryan Rennicker intercepted a McQuaid pass to end the Knights' hopes of coming from behind.

Aquinas finished with 214 yards in total offense — all rushing yards — and Mc-

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Correction

A photograph in last week's issue incorrectly identified a swimmer in a meet between Aquinas/Nazareth and Eastridge. The misidentified swimmer was Eastridge's Kelly Drake. We regret the error.

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