

AQ wins league title, top seed in sectionals

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

The Aquinas Institute football team captured the City-Catholic League title and the top seed in the Section 5 Class BB sectionals with a narrow win over McQuaid Jesuit in the regular-season finale for both teams Nov. 1.

Meanwhile, Bishop Kearney ended its season on a high note with a win; Elmira Notre Dame returned to its winning ways; and DeSales' long season came to end.

The top-seeded Little Irish will play fourth-seeded Irondequoit (4-3-1) in the semifinals of the Class BB playoffs at the University of Rochester's Fauver Stadium at 6 p.m. Nov. 9.

AQUINAS (6-0 in league, 8-0 overall) completed its undefeated regular season with a narrow 24-21 over league-rival McQuaid (1-3-1, 2-5-1) in Fauver Stadium Friday night.

AQ kicker Mike Sloan proved to be the difference as he booted a game-winning, 24-yard field goal with 4:03 left in the fourth quarter.

The Irish offense churned out 304 yards — all on the ground — while the defense held the Knights to approximately 140 total yards, Aquinas coach Joe Munno reported.

Nevertheless, McQuaid made the most of its scoring opportunities. In the first quarter, the Knights' Kelly Scanlon intercepted a Tony Fanale pass to the Irish 21-yard line. Two plays later, Kullen Dickinson punched the ball in from the three. McQuaid led 6-0 after the unsuccessful kick.

Aquinas followed that score with a 10-play, 62-yard drive capped by Phil Wegman's two-yard touchdown run in the second quarter. Sloan's kick was good, giving the Irish a 7-6 lead.

But with just 35 seconds left in the half, McQuaid quarterback Christian Klein (six-of-12 passing for 106 yards) connected with Rob Warren for a 40-yard touchdown. Warren kicked the extra point, and McQuaid went into the locker room with a 13-7 edge.

It was AQ's turn to benefit from miscues in the third quarter. Early in the second half, Aquinas recovered a McQuaid fumble on the Knights' 30, and four plays later Matt Piccone (30 carries, 190 yards) dashed 19 yards for the score. Sloan's kick was good, and Aquinas was back in the lead, 14-13.

The Irish's lead grew a few moments later when Aquinas' defense stopped the Knights, then recovered the ball at the McQuaid 18 when the snap from center flew over the McQuaid punter's



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer
Matt Piccone (left) and center Chris DiAntonio celebrate the Little Irish's 24-21 win over McQuaid Nov. 1. The victory clinched the City-Catholic League title and the top seed in the Class BB sectionals for Aquinas.

head. Three plays later, Wegman (18 carries, 104 yards) ran the ball in from the one-yard line for his second score.

Another successful Sloan kick gave Aquinas a 21-13 lead.

McQuaid then benefited from a bizarre play in the fourth quarter. Dickinson was handed the ball in Irish territory, but while being tackled he flipped into the air and the ball popped loose. After hitting the ground, the ball bounced right into Warren's hands at the 36. He subsequently ran it in for the score.

Klein hit Tim Whelehan on the conversion to knot the score, paving the way for Sloan's winning kick.

BISHOP KEARNEY (4-4) finished its season on a winning note with a 12-3 victory over host Eastridge (2-6) on Nov. 2.

The Kings trailed 3-0 at the half, but they capitalized on a blocked punt in the third quarter, recovering the ball at Eastridge's 27-yard line. Two plays later, Demond Mack connected with



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer
AQ's Matt Piccone rushed the ball 30 times for 190 yards and one touchdown against McQuaid, raising his season total to 1,154 yards.

Kevin Miner for a 25-yard touchdown.

BK's defense forced a punt on Eastridge's next series. The punt was short, however, and just 1:05 after their first touchdown the Kings scored again on a 26-yard run by Mark Tyler (26 carries, 156 yards).

Tyler finished with 1,006 yards for the season.

Over in Section 4, **NOTRE DAME** (5-3) rebounded from two consecutive losses by ripping host Susquehanna Valley 25-12 in a Division IV game on Saturday, Nov. 2.

The Crusaders took the lead early, scoring on a 75-yard bomb from Bryan Woodworth (10-for-21, 204 yards) to Chris O'Herron (five receptions for 145 yards) on their second possession. Pat Palmer successfully kicked the extra point for a 7-0 lead.

Neither team was able to score again in the first half, but on the first play from scrimmage in the second half, Notre Dame's Joel Stevens (137 yards on 16 carries) raced for an 80-yard touchdown. After an unsuccessful kick, ND still held a 13-0 lead.

Susquehanna scored on the next series to pull within 13-6, but the Crusaders responded with a drive that culminated with a 16-yard touchdown run by Stevens. The two-point conversion attempt failed, but the Crusaders led 19-6 at the end of the quarter.

Early in the fourth quarter, Woodworth kept the ball for a 32-yard scoring run. S-V tallied its final points with just two minutes to go.

The Crusaders will close out their season with a divisional game at Dryden on Nov. 8.

Over in the Finger Lakes West, **DE-SALES'** season came to an end with a 40-6 defeat at the hands of host Canisteo on Nov. 2.

The lone score for the Saints (0-8) came on a five-yard run by David Casasanta in the third quarter.

Our Lady of Mercy nets volleyball crown

Top-seeded Our Lady of Mercy High School brought home its first-ever Section 5 volleyball title with a 15-7, 15-12, 15-8 win over Wayne in the Class BB finals at Palmyra-Macedon High School Nov. 1.

The victory avenged the Monarchs' (21-1) lone loss of the season, a five-game thriller back on Sept. 10. Second-seeded Wayne finished the year an impressive 18-1.

Mercy's Sue Schaeffer recorded 19 hits and four blocks in the final. Colleen Cook, voted the tournament's

most valuable player, recorded 13 hits for the Monarchs.

Mercy's Shaeffer and Heidi Kunish were named to the all-tourney team.

The Monarchs advanced to the finals by beating Newark at Wayne by scores of 15-9, 6-15, 15-10 and 15-7 in the semifinals Oct. 29.

Mercy was scheduled to play Class B champion Waterloo (17-2) at Edison on Nov. 6 to determine which team will represent Section 5 Nov. 12 at the University of Buffalo against the Section 6 Class B champion.

McQuaid cross-country team runs to title

NEWARK — McQuaid Jesuit High School edged Greece Athena 47-53 for the Section 5 Class A boys' cross country championship Nov. 2 at Stuart Park in Newark.

McQuaid's Adam Reitz finished fourth, Dan Lesser sixth, Matt Bunce seventh, and Tim Kelly ninth during the race.

The Knights — along with the top five non-McQuaid finishers in the race

— will represent Section 5 in the Class A state meet at Elma Meadows Golf Course near Buffalo Nov. 9.

In other boys' races in Newark, DeSales placed fifth in Class C, as Mark Higgins finishing 10th in the race. Aquinas finished ninth in Class BB, while Bishop Kearney took ninth place in Class B.

Among the diocesan girls' high school teams, Our Lady of Mercy finished third in Class BB.

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