

Double-OT victory sends ND into Final Four

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

These guys probably own one of the most deceptive sub-500 records you'll ever see.

Although the Elmira Notre Dame boys' basketball team entered Section 4 Class C tournament play with an 8-11 mark, the eighth-seeded Crusaders survived close finishes against clubs with a combined record of 35-5 to reach the semifinal round.

ND started out with a 54-51 win over host Tioga last Tuesday, Feb. 25. Then the Crusaders emerged victorious in a 67-62 double-overtime thriller at Groton on Feb. 29.

The Groton game saw the Crusaders rally from a seven-point deficit after three quarters. Groton had a 19-2 record before playing ND, and Tioga was 16-3.

"These kids don't know the meaning of the word 'quit,'" said ND Coach Mike D'Aloisio, whose team competed against much larger schools during the Sullivan Trail Conference's regular season. "They keep going for 32 minutes, and in this case (against Groton), it was 38 minutes."

The Crusaders were scheduled to face No. 2 Waverly on Tuesday, March 3. The finals are this Saturday at Binghamton's Broome County Arena.

ND was the only Catholic high school boys' team in the diocese to survive the first two rounds of sectional play.

McQuaid Jesuit (10-12), the defending Section 5 Class A champion, was a 48-37 winner over No. 9 Penfield on Feb. 26. But the eighth-seeded Knights saw their chances for a second consecutive title go out the door with a 59-42 loss to No. 1 Greece Athena on Feb. 29 at the Rochester Community War Memorial.

Bishop Kearney (12-10), seeded No. 8 in Section 5 Class B, won 69-64 over visiting and No. 9 Geneva on Feb. 26, before falling 60-54 to Palmyra-Macedon, the No. 1 seed, on Feb. 29 at



McQuaid's Steve Roehrig (right) vies for control of the ball with Penfield's Shawn Brown (center) and Scott Davenport during the Knights' 48-37 win over Penfield Feb. 26 in the first round of the Section 5 Class A tournament.

Pittsford Mendon High School.

Geneva DeSales (14-5) was a surprise first-round loser in Section 5 Class DD. The Saints, seeded No. 5, were dumped by No. 12 Mount Morris, 56-35, on Feb. 25 at DeSales.

Aquinas Institute (1-20) also fell in first-round play. The Little Irish, seeded No. 15 in Section 5 Class BB, fell to No. 2 Wilson Magnet, 62-56, on Feb. 25 at Edison Tech.

In its first-round win over Tioga, Notre Dame featured a balanced attack in which six players scored between six and 12 points.

The Groton victory saw ND trailing 40-33 after three periods. The Crusaders forced overtime after Bryan Woodworth was fouled on a three-point attempt with :01 to go and was awarded three free throws. Woodworth, with his team trailing 56-54, missed the first foul shot but made the next two.

Following a scoreless first overtime, Woodworth ran off five consecutive points — on a three-point basket followed by a steal and layup — to give the Crusaders the lead for good in the second OT after they had fallen behind

60-56.

McQuaid pulled away from a 28-25 halftime lead over Penfield by limiting the Chiefs to 12 second-half points. The Knights' top scorer was Jay Wandtke with 16 points.

In the loss to undefeated Greece Athena, the Knights were effective in defending Trojan All-American center John Wallace, who was held to 12 points. But, despite a 17-point effort from Wandtke, the offense was basically quiet all night.

"We did everything we could on defense, but just couldn't hit our shots. We got into a shooting slump at the end of the season," said McQuaid Coach Joe Marchese, whose team averaged just 43 points in its final three games.

Bishop Kearney gained its first-round win over Geneva behind 21 points from Demond Mack and 19 from Joe Raniewicz.

Against Palmyra-Macedon, the Kings nearly pulled off an upset by rallying from a 10-point deficit to take a one-point lead with two minutes to go.

"We had a real good team this year. We just didn't have a man in the middle for some of the bigger teams we played," said BK Coach Ed Nietopski, whose squad recovered nicely from an 0-5 start.

DeSales, faced with a 33-29 deficit after three quarters against Mount Morris, was blown out by a 23-6 margin in the final period. Todd Hardy and Bill Sweeney tied for team high scoring honors with 10 points each.

The loss marked a disappointing end to an otherwise tremendous season for the Saints, who won their final six regular-season games and tied for the Finger Lakes West championship.

Aquinas made a nice effort against Wilson after losing by an average of 21 points to the Wildcats in two regular-season meetings. Matt Delly topped the Little Irish with 15 points, including three three-point baskets.

DeSales, Mercy, AQ girls reach semis

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

It was business as usual for Our Lady of Mercy and Aquinas Institute players, who justified their high seedings by advancing to the Section 5 girls' basketball semifinals.

But a No. 15 seed in the semis?

Surprise! Geneva DeSales was far and away the top Cinderella story of last week. The Saints, seeded 15th in Class D, bumped off host and No. 2 seed Prattsburg, 56-55, last Tuesday, Feb. 25. That shocker was followed by a 40-31 quarterfinal victory over No. 7 Friendship on Feb. 28 at Avoca Central High School.

DeSales, which entered the sectionals with a 4-14 record, is the lowest-seeded team among this year's 60 Section 5 semifinalists (there are seven girls' and eight boys' classifications). In fact, the only other club below No. 7 to reach the semis are the Marion boys (No. 10 in Class C).

"We're feeling very confident and are starting to believe in ourselves. All the things we've been working on are starting to pay off," said Saints Coach Steve Muzzi.

DeSales was scheduled to face No. 6 Greenwood on Tuesday, March 3, at Alfred State College. The championship game is March 6 at Alfred

State. The scheduled start is 7 p.m.

The upset of Prattsburg saw the Saints exceed their game-scoring average of 30 in the first half alone. DeSales led 33-23 at intermission. The Saints were outscored 21-7 in the third period and fell behind by four points, but rallied to win the game when Krista Devaney sank a free throw with :05 remaining to break a 55-55 tie.

Lindsay Higgins had a huge night with 22 points and 16 rebounds, and Devaney added 16 points.

In the Friendship win, DeSales increased a 14-10 halftime lead to 32-20 as Shannon Grifa scored all 10 of her points in the third quarter. Higgins and Devaney led the balanced offense with 12 points each.

Much more expected than DeSales' strong sectional play was that of the Mercy and AQ girls, who also reached their respective Final Fours.

Mercy, the No. 1 seed in Class A, drew a first-round bye and then scored a 59-35 quarterfinal win over No. 9 Webster on Feb. 28 at Penfield High School. The Monarchs (18-0) were scheduled to play on March 3 against No. 6 Greece Athena, with the title contest March 5 at 8:30 p.m. at the Rochester Community War Memorial.

Mercy found itself trailing 14-10 after one period to an inspired Webster club.

"They were just beating us to the ball. We didn't come out with enough emotion," Mercy Coach Kathy Boughton commented.

However, a 22-6 second-quarter explosion put the Monarchs up by 12 at halftime. Sheila Doyle led the offense with 20 points.

Aquinas, the defending Class BB champion and this year's No. 3 seed, put itself in position for another title by defeating No. 6 Greece Arcadia, 49-33, on Feb. 29 at Hilton High School.

AQ (18-3) moved on to a March 3 semifinal meeting with No. 3 Irondequoit. The finals are March 5 at the War Memorial. The championship game is scheduled to begin at 6:45 p.m.

Scoring star Amy Reynders got 22 of her club's 26 first-half points as the Little Irish assumed an eight-point halftime edge over Arcadia. She finished with 31 points, 10 rebounds and six blocks.

"They played man-to-man on Amy; I was kind of surprised," AQ Coach Tim Reynders remarked.

Also making a big contribution was point guard Marcie Meagher, who collected nine assists with just one turnover.

Bishop Kearney and Elmira Notre Dame also reached sectional quarter-

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DeSales offers camp for basketball players

GENEVA — A basketball camp for boys and girls is slated for Geneva DeSales High School, 90 Pulteney Street, this summer.

The camp will feature two boys' sessions: June 29-July 4 and July 13-18. The times are 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day. Both sessions are open to boys in grades 5-9.

A single girls' session will take place July 6-11, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day. Girls entering grades 6 through 10 are eligible.

The camp director is Tony Alvaro, varsity boys' basketball coach at DeSales. Cost is \$65, with enrollment limited to 60 players per session.

To register, call Alvaro at 315/946-6646.