



Erik Kunkel/Photo intern

Aquinas center Grady Monks clears the puck after a shot on the AQ goal Feb. 29, during the Section 5 Class A championship game against McQuaid at Brockport State College. Despite their strong season, the Little Irish were eliminated from the state Division I tournament semifinals March 14 with a 8-3 loss to Massena at the Utica Memorial Auditorium.

## Little Irish season ends with loss to Massena

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

UTICA — After operating out of a must-win mode in all 14 of its previous games — and winning every one of them — it was kind of amazing that the Aquinas Institute hockey team advanced as far as it did this year.

The Little Irish's remarkable late-season run finally ended in the state Division I tournament semifinals with an 8-3 loss to Massena on Saturday, March 14. The game was held at the Utica Memorial Auditorium.

The loss marked the first defeat for the Little Irish since early January, and the first time all year the Little Irish

were beaten by more than one goal. AQ's final record was 21-3.

Aquinas, which entered the Massena contest as the No. 1-ranked team in the state, played without senior forward Chris Schultz. The team's third-leading scorer was suspended for the state Final Four after he was ejected in the third period of his team's 6-0 quarter-final win over Williamsville North on March 7.

Yet even if the Irish had Schultz's services, Massena may have proven to be too much. The Red Raiders broke away from a 1-0 lead after one period by piling on five second-period goals for a 6-0 edge going into the final 15 minutes.

"It was a physical mismatch," said Little Irish Coach Dave Montgomery. "They were stronger than us and had more depth. We stuck with them through the first period, but they were tiring us out."

Brook Lefler finally put AQ on the board by scoring 20 seconds into the third period. Grady Monks and Mike Sloan also recorded third-period goals.

Massena went on to lose to Suffern, 4-3 in overtime, in the March 15 state championship game. Montgomery believed that the Red Raiders' great effort in Saturday's win over his club may have caused them to let down in the finals.

"They were a better team than Suf-

fern, but they used up all their emotion against us," he said.

And so ends a terrific year for the Little Irish, who turned their fortunes around drastically after a 5-4 overtime loss to Greece on Jan. 4. They won their final 11 regular-season games to edge Greece out for the Monroe County Division 1 championship before defeating Irondequoit and McQuaid Jesuit for their second Section 5 Class A title in three years.

"Everybody is kind of down right now, but as time goes on all the memories will come back and we'll all feel a little better," Montgomery concluded.

## McQ relay 3rd in nationals; AQ bowlers 4th in states

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

As the 1991-92 high school winter sports season came to a close this past weekend, the McQuaid Jesuit indoor track team and Aquinas Institute boys' bowling squad exited with some pleasant memories.

McQuaid's 1,600-meter relay runners earned a third-place finish at the National Scholastic Championships in Syracuse. The quartet of Les Bernard, Damon Wade, Mike Keogh and Kris Weldon set a new Section 5 record with a time of 3:23.56.

Their performance, which took place at the Carrier Dome on Sunday, March 15, broke the old sectional mark of 3:25.75 set by the Knights in 1989.

Bernard, Wade, Keogh and Weldon also shattered their own personal-best time by eight seconds. Weldon, who anchored the relay, had the quartet's

best time: 50 seconds flat.

"We beat some super teams. To take a third-place medal — I wouldn't say it was a total surprise, but it was great to place this high in a national championship," commented Coach Bob Bradley.

One day prior to the 1,600 relay's excellent showing, McQuaid took seventh in the distance medley relay at Manley Field House. The Knights' Tim Kelley, Weldon, Keogh and Eric Garsin combined for a time of 10:50.8, which exceeded their previous-best in that event by nearly 20 seconds.

Also competing in the national meet were the Knights' Adam Reitz, who participated in the two-mile run on March 15 at the Carrier Dome. Reitz did not place.

Three weekends prior to the Syracuse meet, the Knights won the Section 5 Class A team title at the University of Rochester.

In bowling, the Aquinas boys recovered from a slow start to take fourth place in the state championships. The tournament was held on March 14 at Shirley Bowl in Shirley, Long Island.

AQ's five bowlers ended with a total pinfall of 4,906 for six games, an average of 163.5.

The Little Irish struggled early, rolling a combined 2,306 series in the morning three-game block.

"We had a tough time; our high series was only 521 for the first three games. The lane condition was very difficult," said Coach Jim Scarfia.

But a 2,600 total in the afternoon, which included a 620 series and 225 game from Dave Dobson, elevated Aquinas from seventh to fourth place.

AQ had earned the right to participate in the nine-section state tournament by winning the Section 5 Class A

championship at North Park Lanes in Irondequoit on March 7.

Other bowlers competing in the states, as members of Section 5's composite team, were McQuaid Jesuit's Brad Tucker and Bishop Kearney's Rick Pluta for the boys along with Our Lady of Mercy's Leigh Foss and BK's Laura Stockslader and Sarah Shea for the girls.

Shea had a very strong day, rolling series of 485 and 522 to finish with a 1,007 total (167.8 average). Stockslader also performed well, totaling 911.

Other scores included Pluta, 903; Tucker, 867; and Foss, 830.

The composite team, which placed ninth, comprised the three highest male and female finishers from the Section 5 tournament who were not members of sectional-winning teams. Completing the composite squad was Sodus' Jared Laird (889).