



Nazareth Academy's Mary Staropoll slides safely into home as Attica's Tammy Richley reaches for the ball during the Lasers' 32-9 win over the Blue Devils May 28 at LaGrange Park. Babette G. Augustin/Photo editor

Irish drop Monarchs; baseball seedings set

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

IRONDEQUOIT — It shaped up as a tremendous clash between two Private-Parochial League rivals who had played to a pair of close decisions during the regular season.

But Our Lady of Mercy, fresh off an amazing comeback victory three nights earlier, was unable to keep pace with Aquinas Institute.

The Little Irish rolled to a 9-2 victory over the Monarchs and advanced to the Section 5 Class BB softball Final Four for the first time in school history. The quarterfinal game was played on Saturday, May 30, at McAvoy Park.

"We had a very emotional meeting before the game," said Coach Dave Herbst, whose Little Irish were seeded third. "We tried to focus on what this game meant to us."

With the win, AQ improved its record to 13-7. The Little Irish were scheduled to play Wednesday, June 3, in a semifinal contest against either No. 2 Bishop Kearney (16-5) or No. 10 Pittsford Sutherland.

The BK-Sutherland game was scheduled to begin immediately following the May 30 AQ-Mercy contest's conclusion, but heavy rain forced its postponement until June 2.

After scoreless ball for the first part of the May 30 game, Aquinas took control with a six-run fourth inning. The Little Irish added three runs in the sixth before 11th-seeded Mercy (10-15) averted a shutout with two seventh-inning runs.

Pitcher Sarah Bierley was in top form for AQ, tossing a five-hitter with seven strikeouts. The Irish won by a surprisingly wide margin considering that they had lost 16-14 and won 17-16 in two previous meetings with Mercy.

The Monarchs had reached the quarterfinals with what has to be considered one of the tournament's all-time great comebacks. Down 12-9 to No. 6 Greece Arcadia with two outs

and nobody on base in the top of the seventh inning, Mercy rallied for five runs, and a 14-12 victory on May 28. The big blow was Chris Sibilio's three-run double that wiped out a 12-11 deficit.

"We've won games like that before, but not of that magnitude," said Mercy Coach Mike Baxter.

Also coming up big in sectional play last week was the Elmira Notre Dame baseball team, which scored an 11-1 rout over Bainbridge-Guilford in a Section 4 Class C first-round game. The Crusaders (9-9), seeded No. 5, were scheduled to face No. 4 Oneonta in the June 2 quarterfinal round.

ND defeated Bainbridge-Guilford behind a two-hitter from Bryan Woodworth and an eight-run fifth inning. The sectional win followed a nine-inning, 7-6 upset victory over Hornell on May 20 in ND's final regular-season game. It was Hornell's only loss all season in the Sullivan Trail Conference.

"The boys realized that if they could beat Hornell, they could beat probably anybody," Coach John Cain remarked.

In other sectional action last week, the Nazareth Academy and Geneva DeSales softball teams were eliminated in the quarterfinals after winning first-

round games.

Nazareth (13-8), seeded No. 5 in Section 5 Class B, won 32-9 over No. 12 Attica on May 28 before falling 6-2 to No. 4 Penn Yan on May 30. DeSales (10-8), the No. 6 seed in Section 5 Class DD, won 12-5 over No. 11 Bolivar on May 27 but was eliminated by No. 3 Romulus, 7-5, on May 29.

Nazareth scored 10 first-inning runs en route to its easy victory over Attica. The Penn Yan contest featured far less scoring, however, as Laser pitcher Linda Iekel turned in a nice performance but was bested by a one-hitter from the Mustangs' Allison Maggart.

"Those were probably two of the best pitchers in the area," said Nazareth Coach Dave Pisano.

In its triumph over Bolivar, DeSales scored five runs in both the second and sixth innings. Cecilia McCann led the offense by going 3-for-3 with two doubles and four runs batted in. In the Romulus loss, the Saints were tied 4-4 before surrendering three sixth-inning runs to the Warriors.

"We left five runners on base in the second and third innings," noted Coach Corky DeYulio. "You've got to take advantage of those situations."

Notre Dame (10-7) had its Section 4 Class C first-round softball game post-

poned by rain. The Crusaders, seeded No. 7, were supposed to play No. 10 Thomas Edison on May 30, but the contest had to be rescheduled for June 1. The winner was scheduled to face No. 2 Sidney on June 2.

Section 5 baseball action was set to begin this week, with the four Catholic high schools in the diocese all earning high seeds.

DeSales (12-2), going for its fifth consecutive sectional title, secured the No. 1 seed in Class D. The Saints drew No. 16 Mount Morris in the June 2 opening round, with the winner facing either No. 8 Whitesville or No. 9 Co-hocton on June 5.

Aquinas (16-8) gained the fourth seed in Class AAA and was scheduled to face No. 13 Marshall on June 2. The winner will play either No. 5 Spencerport or No. 12 Canandaigua on June 5.

McQuaid Jesuit (12-8), seeded No. 6 in Class AAA, was scheduled to open with No. 11 East on June 2. That game's winner will play either No. 3 Brockport or No. 14 Gates-Chili on June 5.

Kearney (12-7), seeded No. 5 in Class AA, drew No. 12 Penn Yan in a June 2 first-round contest. The winner will play either No. 4 Eastridge or No. 13 Victor on June 5.

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Dansville came in second at 4:07.5. Other Monarch relay members were LaMagna, Colleen O'Neill and Amy Martin.

The win was made even more dramatic by the fact that in relay events, only the first-place team can advance to state competition.

Monarchs Coach Tim Jones said he plans on leaving the 1,600 lineup intact for the states.

"Those girls are good. They should break the school record (of 4:04.7)," Jones predicted.

LaMagna will also compete individually this weekend after placing second in the long jump at the U of R. She recorded a distance of 17 feet, 1 inch.

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