

AQ edges Sutherland to claim soccer crown

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

SPENCERPORT — It may be hats off to the Aquinas Institute boys' soccer team, but Dave Ettipio would prefer to keep his hat rooted to his head.

As far as the junior defender was concerned, warm ears equated into a hot foot. Maybe Ettipio knew something, because his wool cap was the only headgear donned by either side in the 30-degree weather — and his foot provided the Section 5 Class BB championship game's only goal.

Ettipio's 15-yard shot with 32:25 remaining gave the Little Irish a 1-0 victory over Pittsford Sutherland in a contest played last Friday evening, Nov. 6, at Spencerport High School.

The victory was AQ's 14th consecutive "W," and it lifted the team's overall record to 18-1. Aquinas, the state's second-ranked Class B team, was seeded No. 1 in the tournament while Sutherland was the No. 3 seed.

AQ was scheduled to face Honeoye Falls-Lima, the sectional Class B champion, in a state Class B qualifier game on Nov. 10. The winner of that game advances to a state quarterfinal contest this Saturday, Nov. 14.

Entering the Sutherland game, the Little Irish had a strike against them because their leading scorer, sophomore midfielder Lin Douangtavilay, had been ejected during the second half of AQ's 3-1 semifinal win over No. 5 Brighton on Nov. 3 at Spencerport.

Douangtavilay's red card, which was assessed after he committed a flagrant foul, meant that he had to serve a one-game suspension — the championship game.

Both Aquinas and Sutherland showed little offense early on as neither team threatened until a direct kick by AQ senior midfielder Matt Poore went off the top of the Sutherland crossbar with 15:25 left in the first half. Poore made another strong effort when his hard shot was stopped by a diving Dave Merrick, the Sutherland goalie, with three minutes to go. Ettipio was also denied by Merrick, on another diving save, with just :05 left.

Aquinas continued to apply heavy pressure early in the second half, and the effort paid off when Ettipio scored. He received the ball off a scramble, spun around, and lifted a perfectly placed ball past Merrick into the net's upper left-hand corner from 15 feet away.

"During practice, Coach (Gary LaPietra) was saying that with Lin out, the defenders would have to help out on offense," a jubilant Ettipio recalled. "He said, 'Dave, you're the one who could score for us.'"

As far as his lucky hat goes, Ettipio remarked, "I'd been wearing it for our last seven games. But I didn't wear it the last time (against Brighton) and we had bad luck in it because Lin got kicked out, so I put it back on for this game."

Following Ettipio's big goal, AQ's



The ball gets away from Aquinas Institute's Matt Poore (right) and Sutherland's Andy Parker as both players attempt to gain possession during AQ's 1-0 win in the Section 5 Class BB title match at Spencerport Nov. 6.

defense held the Knights in check the rest of the night. Junior goalie Josh Gleason recorded the shutout, and junior sweeper Mike Keller was named the game's Most Valuable Player.

LaPietra and Keller noted that Douangtavilay's absence appeared to spur other Little Irish players to raise their level of play.

"Everybody else made the extra effort. I think we'd kind of been looking for Lin too much, anyway," LaPietra commented.

"We wanted to prove we could win as a team," added Keller.

Three nights earlier, in the semifinal game against Brighton, AQ was led by goals from senior forward Jason Mull, Douangtavilay and Poore.

Knights set meet record in winning sectional title

NEWARK — Even for a team that was heavily favored to win, this was an accomplishment beyond belief.

McQuaid Jesuit not only captured the Section 5 Class A cross-country championship, but also claimed the first three places. Those finishes, combined with a sixth- and eighth-place showing, gave the Knights 20 points — a record low for the sectional meet. Second-place Webster finished far back with 86 points.

"It's just nice to see the runners rise to their capabilities," said McQuaid Head Coach Bob Bradley, who won the ninth sectional championship in his 31-year career.

Adam Reitz, a junior, took first place on the 2.95-mile Stuart Park course by recording a time of 16 minutes, 47 sec-

onds. Teammate Dan Lesser, also a junior, came in second with a time of 16:59; and fellow Knight Eric Garsin, a senior, was third in 17:13.

Rounding out the spectacular team performance were senior Tim Kelley, who placed sixth in 17:21, and senior Matt Bunce, who finished eighth in 17:24.

McQuaid, the state's No. 1-ranked Class A team, moves on to the state championships, in which the Knights placed third last year. The meet will take place this Saturday, Nov. 14, at Sunken Meadow State Park on Long Island.

"Our sights have been beyond sectionals, although you can't take the sectionals lightly or you don't go to states," remarked Bradley.

Now, he said, "the guys think they can go on and win" this weekend's competition.

Geneva DeSales produced a state qualifier in individual competition when sophomore Stephanie Nearpass took second in the sectional girls' Class C race. She recorded a time of 21:14.

In other sectional cross-country highlights, the Our Lady of Mercy girls achieved a second-place finish in Class BB with 81 points. Victor took first with 22.

Also, the Nazareth Academy girls placed fifth in Class CC. That race was won by Williamson.

— Mike Latona

Elmira Notre Dame girls lose Section 4 title game

Crusaders fall in OT to South Cortright, 2-1

SUSQUEHENNA VALLEY — This sectional championship game hurt in more ways than one.

Not only was the Elmira Notre Dame girls' soccer team dealt a 2-1 overtime loss by South Cortright, but the players also took a pretty good pounding in the process.

"We were a much more skilled team. We outshot them 28-13, but they were very big and physical," said Crusader Coach Steve Weber after his team's defeat on Monday, Nov. 9.

"We had girls hurt and with bloody noses. They intimidated us; we're just not used to that style of play," said Weber.

The Crusaders, seeded No. 1 in the Section 4 Class D tournament, had reached the finals with a 2-0 semifinal victory over No. 5 Stamford on Nov. 4 in Johnson City.

The game against third-seeded South Cortright had originally been scheduled for Nov. 7 in Chenango Valley, but the date and location were changed due to poor field conditions. Notre Dame entered the game ranked No. 5 in the state Class D poll, while its opponent was ranked sixth.

South Cortright scored the opening goal when Lisa Rappleyea converted just 3:43 into the game. Christina Bruner tied it for Notre Dame midway through the second half, but South Cortright's Kelly Lawrence netted the game-winner 2:42 into the first of two 10-minute overtimes.

Bruner, a junior forward, finished the year with 26 goals and 10 assists. She was the Sullivan Trail Conference's leading scorer during the regular season, and also scored both goals in the semifinal victory over Stamford. Senior goalie Margo Forsythe picked up the shutout against Stamford, making seven saves.

ND completed the year with an outstanding 18-2-2 record. However, Weber lamented the fact that the Crusaders were runners-up in both STC and Section 4 play.

"When you only lose two out of 22 games, you've got to be happy. But I just feel bad for the girls because they don't have any league or sectional championships to show for it," Weber commented.

— Mike Latona

Late TD run catapults ND to title game

Winning may be second nature for the Elmira Notre Dame football team — but having to come from behind is a whole new experience.

In their season's toughest test to date, the Crusaders responded like champions. Shaun Bennett's touchdown run on fourth-and-goal from one yard out with 1:07 remaining enabled ND to emerge with a 13-8 victory over host Tioga in a Section 4 Class C playoff game held on Saturday, Nov. 7.

Notre Dame, ranked 11th in the state Class C-D poll, improved its record to 9-0. ND will face Windsor (8-0-1) in the Class C Bowl Game this Saturday, Nov. 14, at 1:30 p.m. at Cornell University.

The Crusaders came into the playoffs having outscored opponents by a 248-43 count. Yet Tioga put early pressure on the ND defense, driving consistently deep into Crusader territory.

The Crusaders, however, rose up to halt Tioga inside the 10-yard line on three separate occasions to preserve a 0-0 halftime deadlock.

ND finally broke the scoreless tie by mounting a 17-play, 75-yard drive that resulted in a one-yard TD run by Bennett with 1:35 left in the third quarter. Pat Palmer converted the extra-point kick to put his team up 7-0.

Tioga fought right back, with Jeff Moesh making a one-yard TD run three minutes into the final quarter. Damon Walker then ran for the two-point conversion to give the Tigers a one-point lead, 8-7.

On Notre Dame's winning drive, the Crusaders needed two big plays to put themselves into scoring position: a 41-yard pass play from Jon Sutterby to Luke Sheehan, and a 12-yard gain by Joel Stephens to the Tigers' 3-yard line.

Then with 1:34 to go, ND called a timeout while faced with a third-and-goal situation from the 3. Rather than attempt a field goal, Coach Mike D'Aloisio elected to go for the touchdown.

"I told the kids that if we can't get the ball in from three yards, we don't deserve to go to Cornell," D'Aloisio commented.

A Stephens run advanced the ball halfway to the goal line before Bennett reached the end zone with his fourth-down surge over the right side.

— Mike Latona