

Girls' basketball teams dominated by veterans

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

It's highly unusual for a letdown to hamper basketball teams returning 80 percent of their starting lineups from championship-caliber squads.

But Our Lady of Mercy and Aquinas Institute have both lost their brilliant "go-to" players from a year ago. Therefore, a slight adjustment period may be required before the Monarchs — minus Sheila Doyle — and the Little Irish — without Amy Reynders — can return to their lofty 1991-92 levels.

Both schools competed in last week's Seneca Falls Tip-Off at Mynderse Academy. Mercy (1-1) opened its season with a 61-40 first-round win over Waterloo on Dec. 3 before falling to Mynderse Academy, 59-56, in the Dec. 5 finals. AQ (0-4) lost both its contests in that tournament, 65-39 to Mynderse and 57-42 to Waterloo.

Meanwhile, Geneva DeSales (2-0) has continued the same late-season success that enabled the Saints to score two huge upsets in last year's Section 5 Class D playoffs. DeSales won its own tournament by defeating Lima Christian, 44-24, on Dec. 3, and Romulus, 40-25, in the Dec. 5 title game.

Bishop Kearney (1-0) also began the 1992-93 campaign on a positive note, winning 35-27 over visiting Webster on Dec. 4.

Nazareth Academy (0-2) and Elmira Notre Dame (0-4), meanwhile, are still searching for their first wins entering this week's action.

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Mercy is coming off a magical 1991-92 season, when the Monarchs went undefeated before losing in the state Class A quarterfinals to Sweet Home of Section 6 (Buffalo area). Season highlights included three memorable nail-biting wins over Aquinas; a 53-36 rout of Brockport in the Section 5 Class A finals; and a final record of 21-1.

Eighth-year Coach Kathy Boughton's four returners are sophomore guard Gina Montesano, senior guard Mimi LaMagna, senior forward Amy Martin and sophomore forward Kelly O'Neill.

Additional Monarchs are sophomore center Teresa Hartman, junior guards Kerri Boroski, Tricia Russell, Michelle McLaren and Cassie Shea; senior guard Cathy Botelho and senior forwards Jenny Gullely and Kristen Sorokti.

LaMagna and Montesano excelled in the Seneca Falls tournament, combining for 33 and 30 points, respectively.

"Our schedule is very tough, so we're going to suffer early losses," said Boughton. "But I think that in January or February we'll have an ad-

vantage."

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Prominent veterans for Aquinas, all seniors, are center Kristina Dudley, forward Sandy Petty and guards Kristen Burgmaster and Amanda Janas.

Rounding out the roster are freshman forwards Giannine Lioi and Maura Whelehan, junior forward Lynda Limma, senior guard/forwards Megan McCabe and Sandy Thies, junior guard/forward Cori Chase and sophomore guards Jenny Werner and Katya Metidieri.

Petty was Aquinas' leading scorer at Seneca Falls, netting 15 points against Mynderse and 12 against Waterloo.

First-year Coach Lori Mattioli is undaunted by the team's 0-4 start. She said that the players just need to become accustomed to taking more active roles than in 1991-92, when AQ posted a 19-4 record and reached the Section 5 Class BB finals.

"I'm dealing with kids who were told (last year) not to shoot; it was dish off to Amy (Reynders) and that was it," said Mattioli, who takes over the program from Tim Reynders after spending two years as AQ's junior varsity coach. "So we're slow out of the gate, but I don't think there's any reason to write us off."

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DeSales only finished with a 6-15 record last season, but peaked during the Section 5 Class D playoffs when the Saints — as the 15th seed — shocked second-seeded Prattsburg and No. 7 Friendship before being eliminated in the semifinals.

The carryover effect was apparent in last week's tournament, where superb defense spurred the team to a first-place finish.

"We pride ourselves on our man-to-man defense," said 13th-year Coach Steve Muzzi.

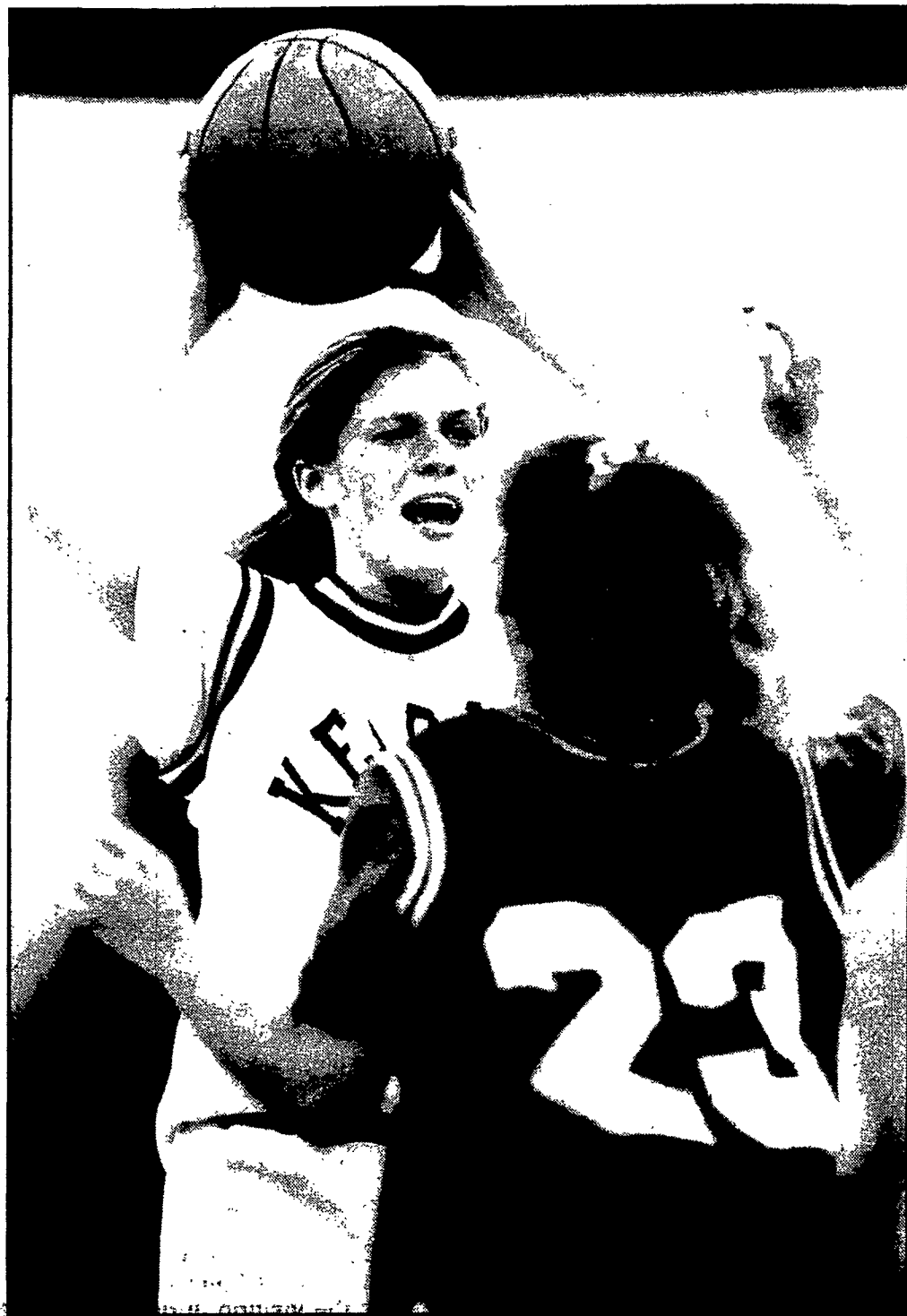
All five starters were on the varsity last year. They are senior guards Krista DeVaney and Cecilia McCann, junior guard Emily Parshall, junior forward Lindsay Higgins and sophomore forward Stephanie Nearpass.

Completing the roster are senior guard Shannon Grifa, junior forward Sara Madigan, junior guard/forward Sarah Cataline and freshman guard Emily Krakowiak.

DeVaney led the Saints against Lima Christian with 16 points, and Nearpass contributed a team-high 14 against Romulus.

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Bishop Kearney is very capable of equalling or surpassing last year's 12-9 finish, according to fourth-year Coach Paul Forte.

"We think we can do some damage this year," said Forte. "I'm looking for



S. John Wilkin/Photo Intern
Bishop Kearney junior guard Patti Lynch searches for an open teammate during her team's non-league game against Webster Dec. 4. Hoping to improve upon last year's 12-9 record, Kearney defeated the visiting Warriors, 47-35.

pretty good things from this group."

BK's starting five features senior guard Janet D'Agostino, junior guard Patti Lynch, junior forwards Jenny Zambito and Kate Jensen, and junior center Sheila O'Hanlon.

Other Kings are senior guards Chris McIntyre and Dana Winterroth, junior guards Jody Durick and Lynne Wiegand, junior forwards Ebony Pelemon and Christy Harrison, and senior forward Terry Teo.

D'Agostino, Jensen and O'Hanlon tied for team-high scoring honors against Webster with six points each.

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In Nazareth's only action through last week, the team lost to Wheatland-Chili, 44-25, and Wayland, 49-30, in the Franklin Tournament held Nov. 27-28. Coach Walt Gordinier's group finished with a 7-13 record last season.

Starters for the 1992-93 club are senior Mary Staropoli, senior

center/forward Tiffany Adams, junior forward Elizabeth Bess, sophomore forward Dionne Robinson and sophomore guard Traci Sergeant.

Additional Lasers include senior guard Donna Sergeant, junior guard Margaret Grabowski, junior forward/center Tamiya Powell and sophomore center Kim Kubitz.

"If the kids can get up to where they're scoring 40 to 42 points, they should be in most of their games," commented Gordinier, who is in his 11th season.

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Elmira Notre Dame remained winless after dropping two games last week: 36-32 to host Trumansburg on Dec. 1, and 52-33 to visiting Groton on Dec. 4. The Crusaders are coming off a final mark of 7-14 in 1991-92.

Starters are senior guards Lisa Punzo and Heidi Hodder, junior guard Lori Spaziani, junior center/forward Kathy Pedalty and sophomore center/forward Jennifer Weinman.

Completing the Crusader roster are junior center/forward Georgianna Sinko, senior guard/forwards Amy Cleary and Jillian Sekella, senior forward Becky Fagan, junior forward Colleen Agan, junior guard/forward Jen Beaty and freshman guard/forward Emily Violette.

Punzo led ND against Trumansburg with 11 points, and Hodder was tops against Groton with 10.

First-year Coach Liz Mayo feels that, despite their winless start, the Crusaders are on their way up.

"I've seen a lot of improvement from the first practice," said Mayo, who replaces Jeff Sobkowski.

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