

# Monarchs retain title

## Spectacular final is determined in double overtime

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — It was a victory so improbable that one of the key performers shouted in disbelief to a friend, "How did we win?"

To answer her own question, all Mimi LaMagna had to do was look in the mirror.

The senior guard, limping so badly from leg cramps that an official even suggested she take herself out of the game, somehow managed to continue creating steal after steal along with backcourt mate Gina Montesano.

That duo's defensive work spurred a spectacular second-half rally as Our Lady of Mercy erased an early 16-point deficit and defeated Greece Athena, 72-66 in double overtime, in the Section 5 Class A finals. The game was played last Thursday, March 4, at the Community War Memorial.

Considering the game's high level of skill, excitement, emotion and significance, this would likely receive several votes as the greatest girls' basketball contest in Section 5 history.

"For me this was probably the most memorable, because it looked like we were out of it," said Mercy Coach Kathy Boughton.

"Most basketball players just dream of being in games like this," added Montesano, a sophomore point guard.

The sectional champions, seeded No. 4 for the tournament, had advanced to meet No. 3 Athena by blowing out top-seeded Fairport, 47-27, two nights earlier at Edison Tech High School.

One other diocesan girls' team, Geneva DeSales, also competed in semifinal action. The Saints, who had upset No. 2 Avoca to reach the Section 5 Class DD semis, were stopped by

## Aquinas

Continued from page 10

by defeating McQuaid Jesuit, 4-3 in overtime, in the Section 5 Class A finals on Feb. 27 at Brockport State.

In the Williamsville North win, Aquinas' Shane Kavanagh made it 1-0 when he scored four minutes into the game. The Spartans then took their only lead, 2-1, on goals from Brian Donley and Adam Hendricks.

AQ then took control by scoring four second-period goals — from Mike Saporito, Chris Sichak, Joe Zabawa and Sichak again — within a span of about five minutes. Dennis Annechino got in on the act by sandwiching his team's final two goals around a score by Williamsville North's Matt Buchwald late in the period.

Following this wild second-period action, both squads went scoreless in the final 15 minutes. AQ goalie Jared Zambito made 17 saves for the game as his team held a 41-20 advantage in shots on goal.

Aquinas Coach Dave Montgomery said he wasn't terribly concerned about his team's early deficit.

"We outshot them 14-7 for the first period, so there was only a little let-down if there was one at all," he remarked. "It was only a matter of time before we started scoring."

— Mike Latona



S. John Wilkin / Photo intern

Our Lady of Mercy's Kelly O'Neill and her teammates hoist the Section 5 Class A championship trophy after the Monarchs' 72-66 victory in double overtime over Greece Athena at the Community War Memorial March 4.

No. 3 Scio, 48-36, on March 3 at SUNY College at Alfred.

Mercy, which successfully defended its 1991-92 sectional crown, has now captured four sectionals during Boughton's eight-year reign and six in the past 10 years.

The Monarchs now move on to the state Class A quarterfinals, where they will face Lockport of Section 6 in a 3 p.m. game this Saturday, March 13, at SUNY College at Geneseo. Mercy enters that contest with a 19-2 record and 17-game winning streak.

Mercy appeared helpless early on against a smoothly executing Athena team led by Kendra Damann, who finished with a game-high 30 points. The Monarchs trailed 33-17 with 2:57 remaining in the second quarter before closing to within 35-24 at halftime.

Then the Monarchs employed the chief trait of great Mercy squads from yesteryear — all-out hustle — to draw even closer. With LaMagna and Montesano continually harassing Athena point guard Chantel Curry, Mercy got to within 48-43 after three periods.

LaMagna attributed the turnaround to Boughton's halftime plea for the team to get its act together.

"She said, 'You don't want this enough,'" said LaMagna.

Finally, with 1:19 to go in the fourth

quarter, Mercy caught the Trojans when Amy Martin's basket made it 53-53. LaMagna made a steal and breakaway layup for a 55-53 lead with :45 to go, before Damann scored with :15 left to make it 55-55.

LaMagna appeared to win the game when she drilled a three-point basket with :05 left in regulation for a 58-55 edge, but Damann responded by forcing overtime with her own three-pointer at the buzzer.

The first three-minute overtime saw each team score eight points, with neither leading by more than two and nobody scoring in the final 50 seconds.

The Monarchs finally pulled away by holding the Trojans scoreless for the entire second overtime. Kelly O'Neill put Mercy ahead for good with 2:41 left, and Martin added two closing baskets to touch off an understandably tear-filled celebration.

O'Neill, a sophomore forward, was named tournament MVP after scoring 21 points against Athena and a team-high 17 in the semifinal win over Fairport. Martin, a senior forward, also hit for 21 against Athena.

Along with her leg cramps, LaMagna played with a broken jaw suffered two nights earlier against Fairport. She still managed 18 points against Athena while Montesano had nine.

## McQuaid

Continued from page 10

with :20 left, but Porretta again converted both his one-and-one chances with :17 to go for the game's final points.

Marchese observed that Porretta's improvement this year has been nothing short of sensational.

"Tony has had the best season of any kid I've ever had, in terms of going from being a non-starter to MVP of a sectional tournament," said Marchese. "He was on the bench when the year

began, and now he's one of the best guards in the area."

The Knights won despite shooting just 24.1 percent (13-for-54) from the field. However, they forced the Red Raiders into 17 turnovers while committing only seven of their own.

"Being a good defensive team helped us. We just wore them down," noted senior forward Jay Wandtke, the team's leading regular-season scorer. His 31-point effort in the semis against East enabled the Knights to reach the championship game.

## BK girls roll to Section 5 win

ROCHESTER — With a convincing victory margin of 130 pins, the Bishop Kearney girls' bowling team captured the Section 5 championship this past Saturday, March 6. The tournament was held at North Park Lanes.

Kearney totaled 2,423 pins to unseat defending champion Wayne, which finished with 2,293. BK team members are Sarah Shea, Stacy Shea, Stephanie Shea, Laura Stockslader, Kathy Stubblings and Carla Valentini.

The Kings have now earned the right to compete in the state tournament. That event will take place this coming Saturday, March 13, at SUNY College at Plattsburgh.

Our Lady of Mercy also made a solid showing in sectionals, taking third place with a 2,260 pinfall. The Monarchs were led by Leigh Fooks, who threw the tournament's high three-game series of 571. She gained entrance into the states on Section 5's all-section team, which features the top individual scorers from non-title squads.

Also competing in the 15-team girls' sectionals were Aquinas Institute, which finished seventh (1,882); and Nazareth Academy, which placed 11th (1,679).

In the boys' sectionals, also held March 6 at North Park, defending champ Aquinas Institute claimed fourth place among 15 schools in Class A with a 2,582 pinfall. Victor was first with 2,746. AQ's Paul Wilson recorded the Class A tournament's high game of 225.

Other diocesan Class A entrants were McQuaid Jesuit, which placed sixth (2,579); and Kearney, which finished 10th (2,311).

— Mike Latona

## McQuaid relay team places third in state

IITHACA — McQuaid Jesuit High School has once again proven its distance-running prowess on the state level.

The Knights' 3,200-meter relay squad emerged as third-best in New York following its performance at the state championships this past Saturday, March 6. The meet was held at Cornell University.

McQuaid's quartet comprised Eric Garsin, Dan Lesser, Adam Reitz and Shawn Watts. The Knights combined for a time of 8 minutes, 9.7 seconds. That was slightly more than four seconds behind the winning time of 8:05.6, posted by Oceanside of Section 8 (Nassau County).

Despite the Knights' high placement, Coach Bob Bradley said his relay members were slightly disappointed.

"Relatively speaking, I guess you could say we ran a good race. But I don't think that any of the four ran as well as they felt they could," said Bradley.

Lesser also competed individually in the 3,200-meter run, placing 18th with a time of 10:14.5. Teammate Watts ran in the 1,000 meters, but did not place.

Rounding out the list of diocesan competitors at the state meet was Aquinas Institute's Gabe Bauza, who ran in the 55 hurdles. He was eliminated in the semifinal heat.

McQuaid's 3,200 relay will be back in action this coming Sunday, March 14, in the National Interscholastic Championships. This meet, which attracted participants from nearly 40 states last year, will be held at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse.

— Mike Latona