

New blood at Aquinas; McQ looks for big year

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

The 1993 season was, in many ways, a magical experience for the Aquinas Institute boys' soccer team.

But it hasn't taken long for the genie to slip back inside his bottle.

AQ, which won the Section 5 Class BB championship last year and advanced all the way to the state Class B semifinals, has been hit with a heavy dose of reality early in the 1993 season. The Little Irish, hampered by various departures of key 1992 players, owned a 2-2 record through the end of last week.

The two losses already match last year's season total, when they finished 20-2 and compiled a 16-game winning streak along the way.

"It's unfortunate, but that's the way it goes," commented Coach Gary LaPietra. "This year we have a lot of new faces, so it's going to take some time."

Yet the Irish still reflect much of the same resiliency that carried them to several close victories in 1993. In the consolation round of last weekend's Honeoye Falls-Lima Tournament, played on Saturday, Sept. 11, AQ trailed Rush-Henrietta 2-1 at halftime before storming back for a 6-3 win.

McQuaid Jesuit, meanwhile, which tied Aquinas for the City-Catholic League championship in 1992, again appears to be one of the top squads in Monroe County. Bolstered by 13 returning players from last year's 13-3-1 club, Coach Dan Schied's Knights have started out with a 2-0-1 mark. They battled powerful Pittsford Mendon to a scoreless tie in a game held Sept. 9 at McQuaid.

Bishop Kearney has a new head coach in Kevin Delehanty, who replaces Chuck D'Imperio. The Kings, competing in their debut season in the Finger Lakes East league, began their 1993 schedule by losing 6-1 to North Rose-Wolcott on Sept. 10 and 2-0 to Syracuse Westhill on Sept. 11 in the North Rose-Wolcott Tournament.

Elmira Notre Dame is not fielding a varsity team this season due to insufficient numbers. Athletic Director Mike D'Aloisio said that the school plans to resume its varsity program next year.

Lin Douangtavilay, Aquinas' leading scorer last year, has transferred to league rival East. Other major absences include senior midfielder-forward Fabio Tata, who suffered a broken pelvic bone over the weekend and could be lost for the season; and senior defender Andrei Lapine, who has been sidelined temporarily with strained ligaments.

However, some of the nucleus from last year's championship club remains. Senior Josh Gleason returns in goal, and other senior leadership is coming from defenders Michael Keller and Doug Crowley, midfielder/forward Tad Valentino and midfielder Dan Moraldo.

Top juniors are forward Jason Weidert and midfielder/forward Michael O'Toole.

Weidert scored two goals in the Sept. 11 victory over Rush-Henrietta, and Valentino added a goal and two assists. The Little Irish had lost 4-2 in overtime to Lewiston-Porter of Section 6 in first-round action one day earlier.

No less than 10 veteran seniors — as well as three juniors with varsity experience — are guiding McQuaid's fortunes.

Returning seniors include midfielder/forwards Franco Bari and Mike Ahern, forward Ryan Loysen, midfielders Greg Light and Ryan Frischmann, and defenders Tristan Burton, Brian Mruk, Mike Mulbury, Pat Meagher and Karl Pashalidis.

Junior vets are goalie Adam Lehmann, midfielder Austin Miller and forward Greg Stevens. Lehmann made 10 saves to gain the shutout against Pittsford Mendon.

Although Schied is happy with his team's early-season play, he is wary of another finish similar to the Knights' upset loss to Webster in the 1992 Section 5 Class A quarterfinals.

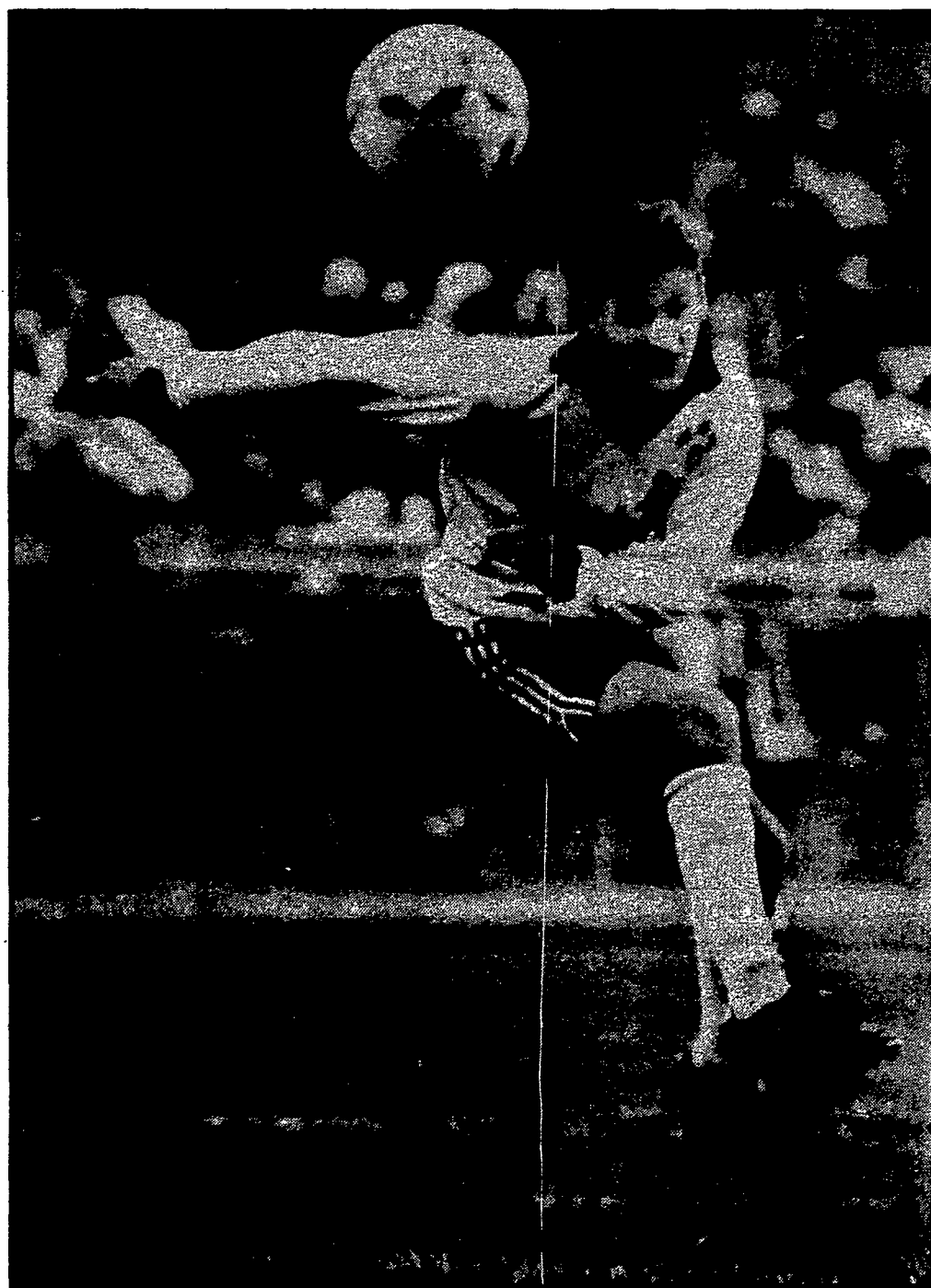
"Our goal is to have the last game of the year be our best," Schied stated. "In the past, we've peaked early in the year."

Bishop Kearney barely missed out on qualifying for sectional play last season, but Delehanty is confident that the Kings can be contenders this time around.

"We should win a majority of our games. We've got a good squad," he commented.

Several seniors are among the Kings' more prominent players, including forward Trevor Smith, defender Mike Gorski, goalie Mark Sasso, and midfielders Sam Mistretta, Michael Cass, Michael Masci and Tobias Zahlmann.

As for the newcomers, Delehanty expects a major contribution from sophomore forward Marty Flynn, an exchange student from Ireland. Zahlmann is also an exchange student, hailing from Germany.



McQuaid Jesuit's Ryan Mooney gets off a shot during a home game against Pittsford Mendon Sept. 9. The match ended in a scoreless tie. S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer



The Knights' Mike Ahern (left) tries to dribble the ball around pressure from Pittsford Mendon's Jeff Steinhelder. McQuaid has 13 players returning from last year's team, making the Knights one of the top teams in Monroe County.

Mercy captures tournament title

An up-and-down week for the Our Lady of Mercy girls' soccer team ended on a positive note.

The Monarchs dominated in the Harley Allendale-Columbia Tournament's championship game, scoring a 7-0 victory over the host Braves on Saturday, Sept. 11.

Gina Montesano led the winners with three goals. Mercy had advanced to the finals with a 5-0 blanking of Honeoye Falls-Lima three days earlier.

The tournament title raised Mercy's record to 4-2. Mixed in with this success were a pair of 2-1 losses: at Pittsford Sutherland on Sept. 7 and at Brighton on Sept. 9.

In other high-school sports highlights involving diocesan Catholic school teams last week:

The McQuaid Jesuit boys' volleyball team reached the semifinal round of the 10-team Fairport Tournament on Sept. 11. McQ's Dave Crooker was named to the all-tournament team.

In boys' cross-country, McQuaid's Dan Lesser ran the meet's fastest time at the Liverpool Invitational on Sept. 11. Lesser completed the 3.1-mile course in 17 minutes, 13.7 seconds.

The Aquinas Institute girls' soccer squad (2-0-1) battled visiting Pittsford Mendon to a 0-0 tie on Sept. 9. AQ goalie Lynda Limma recorded six saves for the shutout.

Bishop Kearney scored a 2-0 victory over Wilson Magnet on Sept. 11 in the consolation round of the North Rose-Wolcott girls' soccer tournament. Janet Lansing scored both goals for the Kings (1-0-1).