

Soccer teams advance with narrow victories

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

At this time of year, you won't hear too many soccer teams complaining "We should've beat them by more."

Indeed, when any kind of loss sends you home for the season, any kind of victory is a welcome one. So the Elmira Notre Dame, Bishop Kearney and Our Lady of Mercy girls were quite content to walk away with one-goal wins in recent sectional playoff action.

Elmira Notre Dame, the No. 1 seed in Section 4 Class C, reached the sectional finals for the fourth time in seven years with a 3-2 semifinal victory at home over Dryden this past Friday, Oct. 29. The Crusaders' 13th straight win improved their record to 17-2. They will face Trumansburg for the sectional championship this coming Friday, Nov. 5, in a 2:30 p.m. game (its location was not known at press time.)

Kearney, seeded No. 6 in Section 5 Class CC, fought off two one-goal deficits and emerged with a spine-tingling 3-2 shootout win over third-seeded Perry. The quarterfinal game was played Oct. 29 at Warsaw. BK (10-8-1) advanced to a semifinal contest against No. 2 North Rose-Wolcott on Nov. 2, with the winner facing either No. 1 Marcus Whitman or No. 5 Le Roy for the Class CC title on Nov. 6 (time and location to be announced).

Mercy, seeded No. 4 in Section 5 Class A, took a two-goal lead and held on for a 2-1 victory over No. 5 Spencerport in an Oct. 30 quarterfinal game at Mercy. The Monarchs (14-4) were scheduled to face No. 9 Brockport in a Nov. 2 semifinal, with that game's winner playing either No. 2 Greece Athena or No. 3 Penfield for the title on Nov. 6 (time and location to be announced.)

McQuaid Jesuit's boys (13-3-3) were the only diocesan team to win by a comfortable margin last week. The Knights, seeded No. 5 in Section 5 Class A, blanked No. 12 Rush-Henrietta, 4-0, on Oct. 26 at McQuaid. McQuaid was scheduled to play No. 4 Greece Olympia in a Nov. 3 quarterfinal contest that was moved from Nov. 1 due to snow.

Three other diocesan teams saw their seasons come to a close when they suffered playoff elimination last week.

The Aquinas Institute boys, seeded No. 3 in Section 5 Class BB, went to two shootouts with No. 6 Greece Arcadia before losing, 1-0, in a quarterfinal contest played Oct. 29 at Spencerport High School. AQ, the defending Class BB champ, ended its season with an 11-6-1 record.

Aquinas' girls also endured a narrow loss. The fourth-seeded Little Irish girls (11-5-2) were defeated 1-0 at home by No. 5 Churchville-Chili in Section 5 Class BB quarterfinal action on Oct. 30.

The Kearney boys (10-7-1), seeded No. 4 in Section 5 Class CC, bowed out of the playoffs with a 2-0 loss to No. 5 Cuba-Rushford in an Oct. 28 quarterfinal contest played at Cohocton.

ND 3, Dryden 2 (girls)

The Crusaders led wire-to-wire, with Christina Bruner and Lori Spaziani scoring first-half goals to give ND a 2-0 advantage.

Dryden closed to within 2-1 at halftime when Sarah Demmo converted a penalty kick, but Bruner netted her second goal 14 minutes into the second half to make it 3-1. Dryden's Sandy Weingart got the game's final goal

with 6:00 to go.

The victory avenged a 3-0 loss to Dryden suffered earlier this season. More importantly, it gave the Crusaders a crack at the school's first-ever Section 4 girls' soccer championship. They've endured defeats in three previous trips to the finals over the last six seasons.

Notre Dame and Trumansburg had one prior meeting this year, with the Crusaders winning 2-0 on Oct. 2. However, Coach Steve Weber knows the revenge factor's significance in rematches, just as it was in ND's semifinal victory.

"The thing I keep reminding the girls is that Dryden beat us the first time," said Weber.

BK 3, Perry 2 (girls)

"I've coached in a lot of big games, win or lose, and this ranks right up there with the classics," remarked Coach Paul Forte after his team's remarkable comeback.

BK trailed 1-0 at halftime on a goal by Perry's Rene Rebisz before Janet Lansing knotted the score at 1-1 with 5:00 gone in the second half.

The Kings appeared doomed when the Yellow Jackets' Sarah Sanford scored with 6:00 remaining in regulation. However, Sandy Moll — who had assisted on Lansing's goal — took a pass from Mary Finucane and scored from 12 yards out with just 2:00 to go.

Both teams went scoreless through two 10-minute overtime periods as well as two extra five-minute sudden-death periods. The outcome was then decided by shootout, in which each team takes five penalty kicks.

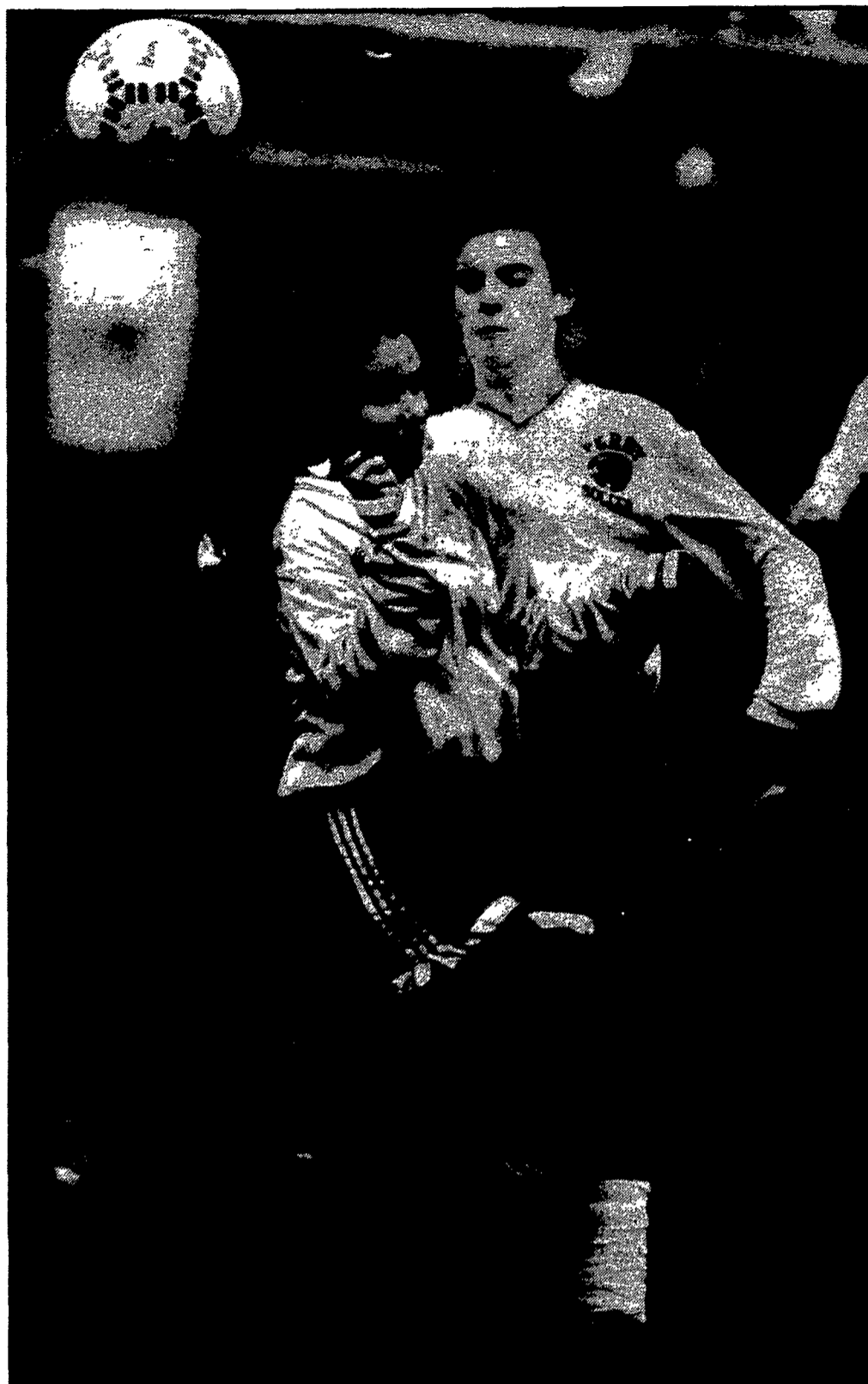
Sandy Shoniker led off the shootout and gave BK a 1-0 lead. Rebisz, Perry's third kicker, made it 1-1 before Kearney's Jessica Thomas immediately followed with the deciding goal. BK goalie Jennifer Vito then made brilliant saves on Perry's last two players to preserve the win.

Mercy 2, Spencerport 1

Junior striker Gina Montesano picked an opportune time to become the Monarchs' all-time single-season scoring leader. Her pair of goals not



Kearney's Laura Stockslader kicks the ball away from a Perry player during the Kings' quarterfinal win. Kearney advanced to the semifinals vs. North Rose-Wolcott Nov. 2.



Bishop Kearney's Janet Lansing (left) collides with Perry's Kristen DeVinney during a Section 5 Class CC playoff game held Oct. 29 in Warsaw. The Kings defeated the Yellow Jackets, 3-2, on a game-deciding shootout.

only put Mercy up 2-0, but they ran Montesano's season total to 34 and enabled her to surpass Sheila Doyle's previous record of 33.

Montesano scored with just under 10 minutes left in the first half, and again with 2:30 gone in the second half. Amy Feltner picked up Spencerport's lone goal midway through the second half.

The Oct. 30 victory reversed a 2-1 loss to the Rangers on Oct. 2.

"Our halfbacks played very well. The last time we played them, we didn't have much support on offense," remarked Mercy Coach Kathy Boughton.

McQuaid 4, R-H 0

Michael Ahern led the McQuaid charge with two goals and one assist, and Franco Bari contributed a goal and two assists. Christian Garofalo got McQ's other goal as the Knights waltzed to victory.

Although the Royal Comets came into the game with a 1-16 record, McQuaid Coach Dan Schied refused to take Rush-Henrietta lightly. Still fresh in his mind was an upset loss to Webster in last year's quarterfinals.

"It's 0-0 at the start of sectionals," Schied commented. "I have a core of players back from last year, and they weren't going to let this one slip by."

Arcadia 1, AQ 0 (boys)

Aquinas held a 15-2 edge in corner kicks over the Titans, but could not score through regulation or overtime.

"We just totally dominated this team, but it was like there was a lid on

the goal," remarked Coach Gary LaPietra.

Even a five-man shootout couldn't decide the game, as both squads scored three goals each. Finally, Arcadia's first player in the sudden-death shootout, Randy Longhouse, scored the deciding goal.

Churchville 1, AQ 0 (girls)

A rather bizarre incident led to the game's only goal. With the Saints pushing the ball into Little Irish territory, an official slipped and took a bad fall. This forced play to be temporarily halted.

The Saints were awarded a throw-in when action resumed, and that allowed Jaime Culp to make a perfect toss toward the AQ goal, which teammate Shannon Larson converted into a score with 10:00 gone in the second half.

"We weren't focused after the stopping of play," commented Aquinas Coach Gary Page.

Cuba 2, BK 0 (boys)

Goals by Cuba-Rushford's Mac Thorington and Jason Pastorious sent the Kings home with a loss.

Coach Kevin Delehanty said that Cuba-Rushford's physical style, along with sloppy field conditions, worked against his club.

"We were the better-skilled team and we controlled a lot of the game," said Delehanty. "But it wasn't a game you could feel good about because it was so brutal. You've got to hand it to them (Cuba-Rushford), though. They came out fired up and played well."