

Mercy volleyball falls after big win over BK

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Yes, the title-match loss to Victor was tough to swallow for the Our Lady of Mercy girls' volleyball team.

But it wasn't so bitter that it could wipe out the sweet, sweet taste of the Monarchs' comeback victory over their arch-rival, Bishop Kearney, three nights earlier.

"That was the highlight of our season," said Coach Nancy Wunder, whose club rallied for a 6-15, 13-15, 15-4, 15-6, 15-5 win over BK in Section 5 Class BB semifinal action on Tuesday, Nov. 2, at Edison Tech.

The Monarchs, seeded No. 3 in the tournament, then put up a good fight against top-seeded and undefeated Victor before falling 15-5, 15-10, 15-6 in the finals on Nov. 5 at Edison.

That defeat gave Mercy — which won the Class BB crown in 1991 — a final 1993 record of 16-5. Victor, meanwhile, took its second straight championship and improved to 21-0.

In other volleyball playoff action last week, the McQuaid Jesuit boys, seeded fifth in Section 5 Class A, were dealt an 11-15, 15-5, 17-15, 15-13 defeat by host and fourth-seeded Canandaigua in quarterfinal play on Nov. 4.

Mercy showed signs of springing an upset against Victor by taking a 10-8 lead in the second game. However, the Blue Devils proceeded to run off seven straight points for the win.

A similar pattern unfolded in the third game, with Victor unleashing another seven-point run to erase a 5-4 Monarch lead. The Blue Devils also

took the final four points to finish off the three-game sweep.

Wunder remarked that she had no regrets about her club's effort.

"I thought we played excellent. We gave them a run for their money; I think we surprised them," the Mercy coach said.

Onlookers may have been surprised about the Monarchs' semifinal triumph over Kearney after they dropped the first two games of that match.

However, BK Coach Paul Coppini knew his team was in trouble after it led 14-5 in the second game but barely hung on for a 15-13 win.

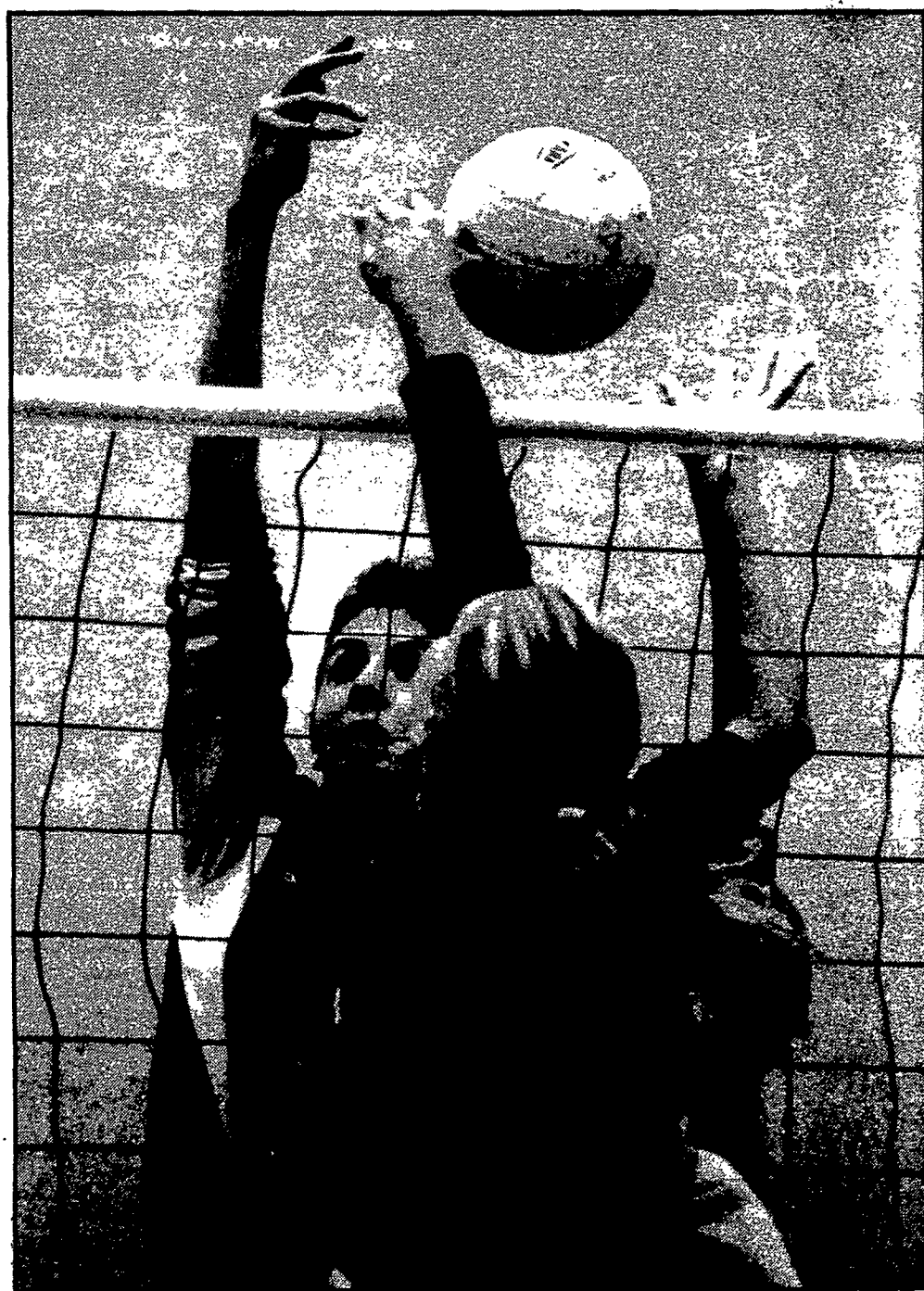
"We started to burn out, and we couldn't recover no matter how hard we tried," said Coppini. His second-seeded Kings' final mark was 18-5.

The marathon struggle stood in stark contrast to two regular-season matches between the Monarchs and Kings, who each recorded sweeps on their home courts. Both clubs tied for this year's Private-Parochial League championship along with Harley Allendale-Columbia.

With a pair of two-point losses leading to elimination against Canandaigua, McQuaid Coach Ed Waller had ample occasion to dwell on "what-ifs."

"It was well-played both ways, but we had moments we just couldn't put it together — lapses in concentration, focus, whatever," commented Waller, whose club ended the season with an 11-7 record.

Despite their quarterfinal loss, the Knights' future looks extremely promising; their junior varsity posted a perfect 17-0 mark this year.



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
Teresa Hartman (left) of Our Lady of Mercy readies to block a shot by Victor's Sheila Masley during the Section 5 Class BB championship match at Edison Tech on Nov. 5. Mercy lost 15-5, 15-10, 15-6.

Kearney

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soccer title. The game was played at Holley High School.

BK raised its record to 12-8-1. The Kings were next scheduled to face Section 5 Class C champion Bloomfield in a state-qualifier game on Wednesday, Nov. 10.

With sudden-death overtime looming against Marcus Whitman, Finucane burst up the field's left side and sent the ball toward the Wildcat goal. Lansing took an initial shot that goalie Alison Prestia dove to stop, but the ball squirted away from her and rolled free to Moll. She converted successfully to touch off a wild BK celebration.

"It seemed like the ball was sitting there forever. It was like slow motion," said Coach Paul Forte.

Moll, still stunned by her accomplishment, also had difficulty recalling

exactly how the play occurred.

"I just hoped it would go in," the freshman said.

This championship was certainly earned: sixth-seeded BK defeated all three of the top seeds (No. 1 Marcus Whitman, No. 2 North Rose-Wolcott and No. 3 Perry).

Yet Lansing, for one, wasn't all that surprised by her team's feat. "We thought we had a chance," she said.

"This is one of the hardest-working groups I've ever had, boys or girls. This is special," said Forte, whose last sectional title came exactly 10 years ago when he coached the Cardinal Mooney boys — a team which went on to capture the state championship.

The BK girls had advanced to the Class CC finals with a 1-0 semifinal victory over North Rose-Wolcott on Nov. 3 at Wayne Central High School. Sandi Shoniker's penalty-kick conversion with 20:03 left in the first half was the difference in that game.

Knights manhandle Greece Olympia, Spencerport

BRIGHTON — No, those weren't the Greece Olympia and Spencerport JVs on the field against the McQuaid Jesuit boys' soccer team.

They were indeed the varsity squads which suffered routs by respective scores of 5-1 and 5-0 to the Knights.

McQuaid, seeded No. 5 in Section 5 Class A, reached the sectional finals for the first time in school history with a 5-0 semifinal home win over No. 8 Spencerport on Monday night, Nov. 8. That victory was preceded by a 5-1 quarterfinal triumph over host Greece Olympia on Nov. 5.

McQuaid's domination was so

thorough that Coach Dan Schied had trouble coming up with a reason.

"If I could explain that, maybe we would have seen it all year," Schied remarked.

Although bewildered by the margin of victory, Schied said his team's reaching the finals was no accident.

"We did not want to put too much pressure on the regular season. Our goal was to have a nice, steady climb," the McQuaid coach explained.

The two victories improved McQ's record to 15-3-3. They were scheduled to play second-seeded Gates-Chili for the Class A championship on Wednesday, Nov. 10.

Elmira Notre Dame thwarted in Section 4 football semis

JOHNSON CITY — Too bad that this wasn't a best-of-three series.

Based on Elmira Notre Dame's effort against Walton, the state's top-ranked Class C team, nobody would have been surprised if the Crusaders had won a rematch.

But that's not the way it works in high-school football playoffs, so ND had to bid its 1993 season goodbye with a 19-14 loss to the Warriors.

The Section 4 Class C semifinal contest was held this past Saturday, Nov. 6, at Johnson City High School. Walton, the top seed, improved its record to 10-0. The third-seeded Crusaders, ranked 15th in the state, ended the year at 7-2.

ND took the early lead, going up 7-0

when Tom McNamara threw to Joel Stephens on a 14-yard touchdown pass play midway through the first quarter.

Two Walton scores late in the second period proved pivotal. Jason Latourette caught a 12-yard TD pass from Jon Bujno with 4:00 to go; then the Warriors regained possession on an ND fumble. Bujno followed with a seven-yard scoring run with just 20 seconds left in the half to make it 13-7.

Walton upped its lead when Graydon Dutcher scored from one yard out with 5:00 left in the third period. Notre Dame made it 19-14 when Stephens made a four-yard TD carry with just under 5:00 to go in the game.

ND then held Walton, and took over at its own 39-yard line with 2:30 to go. However, Chris Tuite was stripped of the ball at the Walton 36 after making a 13-yard catch from McNamara, and the Warriors recovered.

Stephens was limited to 41 yards for the game but still stands as ND's all-time leading rusher with 2,751 yards — 1,236 coming this season. Only a junior, the running back also holds the school's career scoring record with 206 points.

Coach Mike D'Aloisio was pleased with the effort put forth by his ND club against a Warrior powerhouse that has won 70 of its last 74 games.

"These kids make me proud. They wanted to work at getting the state title, and they made a real valiant effort at trying to get there," D'Aloisio commented.

— Mike Latona