

Monarchs hit another roadblock in state semis

Shenendehowa wins, 3-1, in OT

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

ALFRED — In many respects, this was like a recurring bad dream for the Our Lady of Mercy girls' soccer team. Same round of the state playoffs, same opponent — and same type of result: a hard-fought defeat.

Yet it's rather hard to tab this a nightmarish experience when the Monarchs staged such a solid display of soccer in their state semifinal game against Shenendehowa (Section 2, Albany area).

"We came down here and put on our show," said junior striker Gina Montesano, shortly after her team's 3-1 overtime loss to the Plainsmen. The game was played last Friday, Nov. 19, at Alfred University.

"To stick with them and go into overtime — that showed that we belonged there," added Coach Kathy Boughton, whose team came in as a sizable underdog.

This resiliency was especially apparent in the Monarchs' response to the 1-0 deficit created when Shenendehowa's Antoinette DeLucia scored with 23:36 remaining in the second half.

It took Mercy only 25 seconds to answer, as Melanie Heeder quickly launched a shot that went off the hands of Plainsmen goalie Stacey Adams. Monarch reserve forward Mary Ellen Dzakowic buried the rebound, and just like that, it was a 1-1 game with 23:11 to go.

"That was a character builder," Boughton commented.

Thanks to some acrobatic goaltending by senior Kelly O'Neill, the Monarchs forced overtime. O'Neill had nine saves in the game, including many from short range.

"It was her best game of the year, and the difficult thing is that the shots were coming so fast," said Boughton, whose club was playing on artificial turf for the first time all season.

However, the Shenendehowa pres-

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Mercy's Gina Montesano (left) comforts teammate Shawna Selner at the conclusion of the Monarchs' 3-1 state semifinal overtime loss to the Shenendehowa Plainsmen at Alfred University Nov. 19.

S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Irish take aim at third straight sectional hockey crown

New season opens with weekend games

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Asked to rate his team's chances for the upcoming season, Dave Montgomery took a very diplomatic approach.

"Most coaches in the league would tell you we're the favorite," he said.

Which usually means that the person quoted isn't about disagree with those coaches.

It's shaping up to be another strong campaign for Montgomery's Aquinas Institute hockey team. The Little Irish begin their quest for a third consecutive Section 5 Class A championship with two season-opening games this weekend.

AQ, which posted a final 1992-93 record of 20-3-2, will face two Buffalo-area teams at Lakeshore Rinks in Greece: the Irish take on Bishop Timon at 1 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 27; and face St. Joseph's at 2 p.m. the following day.

McQuaid Jesuit, which has fallen to Aquinas in each of the last two sectional finals — including a classic 4-3 overtime game this past winter — is looking to rebound from the loss of two stars, Sean Ritchlin and Marty Reasoner. Both have left McQuaid to attend prep school.

The Knights, who finished 17-5 last season, open their 1993-94 schedule against Batavia on Dec. 1 at Genesee Valley Ice Arena (6:45 p.m. start).

Bishop Kearney is hoping to improve on its 5-15 finish from last season. The Kings will play the concluding game of the first-ever Kearney Invitational this Saturday at 7 p.m. against Spencerport. The Classic is being held at the Rochester Community War Memorial.

Great goaltending from Aquinas' sophomore duo of Jared Zambito and Alex Vigneri will create a solid foundation for the Little Irish. Senior Dennis Annechino and sophomore Mike Saporito return to anchor the defense, and freshman Sean Corcoran is a promising newcomer.

Top forwards are seniors Joe Zabawa, Joe Gionta, Matt Miller and Steve Bell; sophomore Shane Kavanaugh, and freshman Brian Gionta.

Montgomery, whose club is also the defending Monroe County Division I champion, feels that his current Little Irish are cut from the cloth as recent great AQ squads.

"It's very similar in the way it's put together. We're usually quick and not very big," said Montgomery. "It's just a matter of who steps up and scores for us."

McQuaid sophomore forward Larry Pierce will be counted upon heavily to perpetuate the excellence of his old linemates, Ritchlin and Reasoner.

"I think he's going to be the best player in the league," predicted Coach Al Vyverberg. "He's the best on our team and the players know it, but he's such a nice kid that nobody resents it."

Other leading forwards are seniors Mike Viscardi and Eric Mace. Standout defenders are junior Nate Lukaszonas and seniors Tom Savage and Mike Mulbury. Goaltending duties will be

split between juniors Jake Eisenhauer and Jeff Sattora.

Vyverberg feels that his club's superior attitude will help compensate for its loss of firepower.

"These kids are driven. They worked hard in the off-season," he remarked.

Bishop Kearney junior Chris Ashton returns for his third year in goal, and senior Trevor Smith is beginning his fourth year at forward. Their talents will be extremely vital to BK's success in 1993-94, said Coach Rob Liberatore.

"Goaltending is my strength," Liberatore commented. He added that "Trevor Smith has got to be my dominant scorer this year."

Other notable Kings are sophomore forwards David Principe and Richard Dobosz, junior forward Michael DeWind, junior defenseman David O'Neil and Matt Vanderven, and freshman forwards Charlie Nersinger and Jon Providence.

"I think we're going to try and be an aggressive, grind-it-out team," said Liberatore.