

Kearney bids Goode-bye to Sutherland

Kings earn first title; coach hits milestone

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Ed Nietopski knows how rare a high, and how precious a memory, this can be.

As Nietopski watched his ecstatic players receive their Section 5 championship trophy, he tingled the same passion which had enveloped him some 45 years earlier as a professional baseball player.

"I said to myself, 'I feel now like I did when I was 21 years old and hit my first home run for the (Rochester) Red Wings,'" said the 66-year-old Nietopski as he stood amidst a jubilant locker-room celebration which included chants of "401, 401" from his team.

Although Nietopski had reached a major milestone with his 400th career victory in a 56-34 Class B semifinal win over Livonia three nights earlier, it was indeed the 401st triumph which will provide him — and scores of other BK supporters — with the sweetest memories.

With brothers Patrick and Kevin Goode leading the way, Kearney shocked previously undefeated Pittsford Sutherland in the Class B final, 59-56 in overtime, on Friday, March 4.

The spectacular thriller, played at the Rochester Community War Memorial, provided BK with the school's first-ever sectional basketball title.

"This is what high-school basketball is all about," said BK junior forward Vernon Banks, who was held to two points but contributed six rebounds and three key blocks against Sutherland.

The Kings, seeded No. 3 in the tournament, improved their record to 15-7 while the top-seeded Knights' season ended with their first loss after 22 straight wins.

Kearney was scheduled to take on Franklin, the sectional Class BB champ, in a state-qualifier game this past Wednesday, March 9. The winner advances to a state Class B quarterfinal contest on March 12 at the University of Buffalo.

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Kearney surrendered the game's first four points, but that was the largest edge Sutherland would enjoy the rest of the night. BK rallied to take a 10-9 lead after one quarter, and then went up by as many as five points before settling for a 24-23 halftime advantage.

Much of the game was played at a furious pace, but speedy BK junior Patrick Goode helped keep BK under control with steady play from his point guard position.

Goode's equally fleet-footed brother Kevin, a sophomore, got into the act by coming off the bench to score all of his

career-high 14 points after halftime. And even though the Goodes each stand only 5-foot-10, they also combined for 11 rebounds.

This factor was crucial because BK's main rebounders, Banks and senior center Rich Cannon, were plagued with foul trouble for most of the second half and eventually fouled out.

"That was hard on us, but we came together," Patrick Goode remarked.

Kearney held yet another narrow lead after three quarters, 38-36, on Kevin Goode's three-pointer with 15 seconds to go. The Kings maintained a tiny edge most of the fourth quarter, but the Knights forced overtime when Jamone Turner (16 points, 16 rebounds) made it 52-52 on a jumper from the foul line at the buzzer.

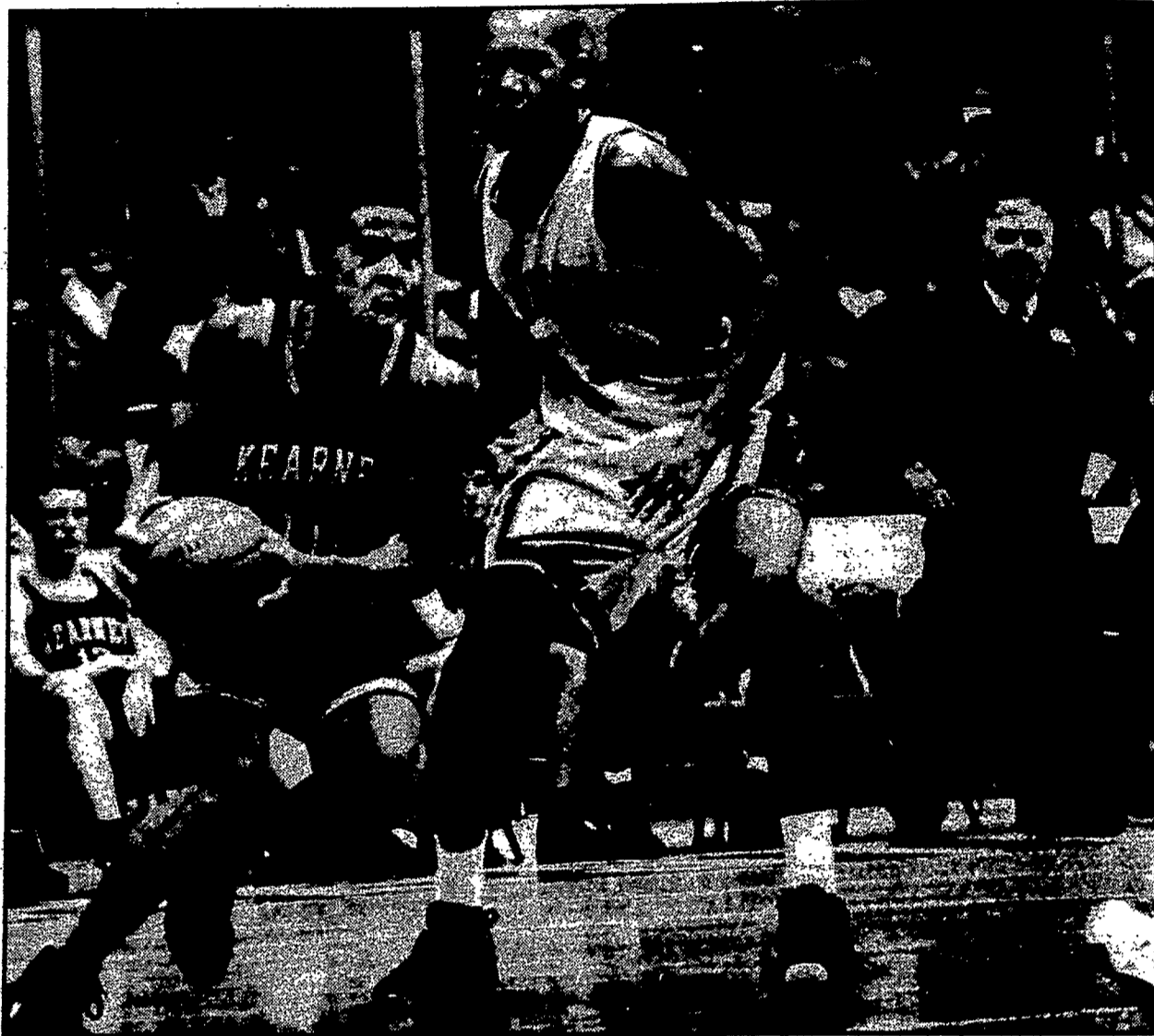
Each team scored one basket in overtime, but Kearney was 5-for-10 on free throws while Sutherland went 2-for-5. The deciding sequence featured Kevin Goode, who scored five straight points within 14 seconds — on a basket and three free throws — to turn a 54-52 deficit into a three-point edge with 1:20 remaining.

The Knights' Chris Bramley and Ryan Blackwell each made a foul shot as Sutherland pulled to within 57-56 with :24 left, but BK's Jason Derleth canned two free throws with :21 to go for the game's final points.

Blackwell, a 6-foot-8 junior center who is being heavily recruited by Syracuse University, led all scorers with 29 points and was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player. However, of the 33 shots Blackwell took, he only converted nine for a little better than 27 percent.

Kevin Goode and junior forward Adam Randall shared BK high-scoring honors with 14 points each. Patrick Goode finished with 12, and Cannon also reached double figures with 11.

"No team can key on one person," Patrick Goode noted in acknowledging



St. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Bishop Kearney's Pat Goode (left) drives past Ryan Blackwell of Pittsford Sutherland while Kings' Coach Ed Nietopski (far right) looks on March 4 during the Section 5 Class B basketball championship game at the Rochester Community War Memorial. The Kings defeated the Knights, 59-56, for the school's first-ever sectional title in basketball.

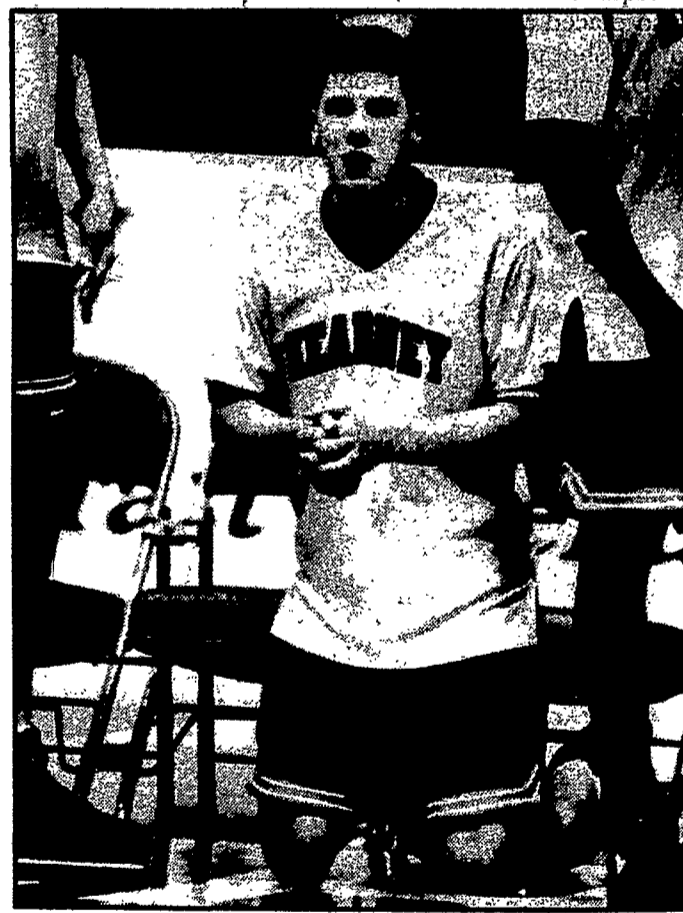
his club's well-rounded attack.

Nietopski couldn't have been prouder of his team's gritty effort, saying, "The way we played was really championship style."

This marked Nietopski's second sectional basketball crown in a high-school coaching career which has spanned more than three decades. His other title came in the 1982 Class A sectionals with the former Cardinal Mooney High School.

While some may view this as the perfect opportunity for Nietopski to retire on a winning note, the veteran coach quickly laid that notion to rest.

Kearney's Chris Muscato kneels in prayer during the final seconds of the sectional championship game.



Hot hand swats McQuaid out of Class A tournament

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — A crush of media and well-wishers engulfed Rush-Henrietta's Greg Buntich as he walked off the Rochester Community War Memorial court.

One floor below, the contrast could not have been more glaring.

Deflated and defeated, McQuaid Jesuit Coach Joe Marchese stood alone outside his team's locker room, marveling at the performance with which Buntich had just ended the Knights' season.

Although McQuaid held Buntich to a scoreless first half, the Royal Comets' star guard erupted for 24 points — including 19 in the final quarter — as Rush-Henrietta pulled away for a 63-54 victory in a Sec-

tion 5 Class A semifinal game held last Wednesday evening, March 2.

"We knew he was a great player and we did a good job on him until the fourth quarter, but we lost him on defense," Marchese lamented. "The thing that impressed me is that he let the game come to him; he didn't force it. That's the sign of a great player."

McQuaid, the No. 4 seed and defending Class A champion, ended its season with a 15-7 record. Top-seeded Rush-Henrietta, meanwhile, went on to defeat second-seeded Fairport, 56-45, in the Class A championship contest held March 5.

The Knights trailed 13-11 to R-H after one quarter and took their first lead, 16-15, when Ben Wandtke made a free throw with 4:48 remaining in the sec-

ond quarter. Teammate Rob Norris hit a three-point basket with 23 seconds to go to put McQ up 23-22 at the half.

That advantage grew to as much as 36-31 with one minute left in the third period. But Buntich then came to life with a fury, leading R-H on a devastating 19-3 run which gave the Royal Comets an 11-point lead, 50-39, midway through the final period.

A crucial portion of this streak occurred early in the fourth quarter, when McQuaid, trailing 41-37, missed four consecutive attempts at a lay-up during a single possession. Buntich then popped a three-point basket just a few seconds later, so the Knights, rather than pulling to within two, were saddled with a seven-point disadvantage.

"That was a big turnaround," said Marchese.

McQuaid climbed back to within four, 58-54, on Greg Roehrig's basket with :39 remaining. However, Buntich went 4-for-4 from the foul line and teammate Matt Wilkens added a free throw to provide R-H with the game's final five points.

Buntich, a senior, was 10-for-13 at the foul line in the fourth quarter. His 24 points led all scorers.

Roehrig, a senior forward, also put forth a fine individual effort by going 8-for-13 from the field and finishing with 25 points. Norris, a junior guard, added 12 points.

This marked the sixth time in eight years that Marchese's Knights have reached the sectional semifinal round.