

BK, McQuaid envision more March Madness

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Don't expect Bishop Kearney and McQuaid Jesuit to be adversely affected by cabin fever come March.

These two boys' basketball teams are hoping to stay indoors — preferably at the Rochester Community War Memorial — for a good portion of the month. And based on recent history and available talent, the Kings and Knights are good bets to go deep into the post-season.

Kearney is coming off a magical 1993-94 finish in which the Kings compiled a 15-8 record and earned their first-ever Section 5 championship. BK captured its crown in spectacular fashion with a 59-56 overtime win over previously undefeated Pittsford Sutherland in the Class B title game.

Veteran coach Ed Nietopski is equipped with three returning starters, all seniors: guard Patrick Goode and forwards Vernon Banks and Adam Randall. Two players who also saw substantial action last year — junior guard Kevin Goode, Patrick's brother, and senior center Mark Jensen — round out the starting lineup.

Completing the BK roster are seniors Sean Nicholas, Jason Dady, Jeff Smith and Chris Muscato; juniors Mike DiGregorio, Jason Mersdorf, Darryl Cotton, Steve Wandtke and Mike Nevins; and sophomore Scott Harrison.

Nietopski feels that earning another title would be difficult, but not impossible.

"It's the toughest schedule I've ever had," he said. "We've got a pretty good ball club, but how far we go depends on a lot of things. We'll be trying to play the same kind of game — run our break



File Photo

Bishop Kearney guard Patrick Goode soars to the basket during a Section 5 playoff game against Dansville last February. Goode, now a senior, is one of several talented veterans on the Knights' defending Class B championship club.

and play good defense, which was our key last year."

The Kings, who play an independent schedule, open their season on Thursday, Dec. 1, in the Waterloo Tournament with a 6:30 p.m. game against Mynderse Academy.

McQuaid is bidding to reach the Section 5 Class A Final Four for the seventh time in nine years under Coach Joe Marchese. The Knights were stopped in the 1994 semifinals by Rush-Henrietta after winning the title in 1993.

Marchese, whose team finished 15-7 last season, doesn't attempt to mask his optimism about his current Knights.

"We've got two real good seniors and talented underclassmen," said Marchese. "We can go nine-deep."

Senior guard Rob Norris, who has already committed to a full scholarship at

Fairleigh Dickinson University, starts at guard. Another standout player is senior forward Ben Wandtke, who is still entertaining football offers from Division I colleges as well as basketball scholarships from several Division II schools.

Yet the Knights' greatest talent of all may lie in the 6-foot-8-inch frame of sophomore center Chris Fox. "His post play for a kid his age is way beyond anybody we've seen," Marchese remarked.

Other top Knights are junior Paul Pasarella and seniors Tim Schwalm and Sean Finegan at guard; and sophomore Cade Lemcke and seniors Nate Sheppard and Joe Winters at forward.

Rounding out the roster are juniors Mike Manzo, Matt Thomas, Tyler Neer and Steve Olufsen.

The Knights open their season and City-Catholic League schedule when they host Marshall on Dec. 6 at 7 p.m.

Geneva DeSales is already showing signs of bettering its 4-16 finish from a year ago. The Saints rolled over Harley Allendale-Columbia in the DeSales Tipoff Tournament consolation game, 57-34, on Nov. 26.

"It takes a little stress off your shoulders," remarked Coach Tony Alvaro on the lopsided win, which occurred one night after a 59-40 loss to East Rochester.

Current DeSales starters are seniors Jayson Lamson and Mike Sweeney; along with juniors Mark Perillo, Mike Windle and Robert Peters. Sweeney and Windle are guards, and the other three alternate in the backcourt and up front.

Other Saints include senior Kyle Perillo and juniors Dan Osborne, Chris Petrosino and Mike DeVaney.

Sweeney had the hot hand against H-A-C, scoring a team-high 21 points. Lamson led the Saints against East Rochester with 12.

DeSales begins its Finger Lakes West schedule on Dec. 2 with a 7:30 p.m. home contest against Red Jacket.

Aquinas Institute is coming off a 9-13 finish in 1993-94. According to Coach Mike Dianetti, reaching the .500 level this year would be a real accomplish-

ment taking into account AQ's always challenging City-Catholic League schedule, which Dianetti refers to as "going through the gauntlet."

"I've got a lot of young kids coming up, so I really don't know what to expect," said Dianetti. "We shoot the ball well, but we're not real big. Rebounding is going to be the major thing."

Projected starters are senior forward Pete Reynders; junior forward Jason McConnell; senior guard Mike Setzer; junior guard Jerrit Branagan; and sophomore guard John Miller.

Other Little Irish players are seniors Sal Brimacombe and Michael O'Toole; juniors Brian Campe, Rhett VanSchoot, Todd Ciavardini, Jay Wegman, Ken Farrell, Justin Hill and Kevin Callahan; and sophomore Brandon McGriff.

AQ's opening game is Dec. 2 in the Victor Tournament against the host Blue Devils (8 p.m. start).

In the Southern Tier, Elmira Notre Dame Coach Mike D'Aloisio expects the Crusaders to improve upon their 7-3 showing from 1993-94.

"Last year it was all underclassmen and we felt that it was a two-year commitment. This is the second year, and hopefully good things will happen," said D'Aloisio.

The coach added that the Crusader game plan will take on a new appearance. "We'll look to up-tempo a little bit more, and do more pressure defense," D'Aloisio predicted.

Clear-cut starters are senior guard Mike Lynch and senior forwards Joel Stephens and Mike Berrettini. The remaining guard spot is being filled by senior Rick Maxa and junior Chris Madigan; with center being split by junior Jon Harley and sophomore Brad Polk.

Remaining Crusaders are seniors Damian Cleveland, Matt Cornacchio and Jim Whittaker; juniors Dan Morrelle and Mike Valeant; and sophomore Chris Sheehan.

Notre Dame opens up in the Towanda Tournament on Dec. 2 against North-east Bradford (6:30 p.m. start).

Kings ice Hilton in invitational

ROCHESTER — One year ago, hockey victories were scarce commodities for Bishop Kearney — and lopsided wins were downright out of the question for a team which ended with a 3-19 record.

Obviously, BK isn't dwelling on the past. The new-look Kings made a startling 1994-95 debut on Saturday, Nov. 26, crushing Hilton 9-2 in the Kearney Invitational Classic at the Rochester Community War Memorial.

"We picked up a goal from everywhere — our first, second and third lines, and two from the defense. Everybody contributed," said exuberant BK Coach Rob Liberatore.

Goaltender Chris Ashton was named the game's Most Valuable Player, stopping 25 of 27 shots. Jon Providence led the offensive charge by collecting two goals and three assists, and Charlie Nersinger logged two goals and two assists. David Principe also scored two goals, with Don Stiner, Chris Howe and Dave O'Neil contributing single goals.

"It was all us from the beginning," said Liberatore, whose team led 4-0 after one period and 9-2 after two before a scoreless final period. "The kids really worked hard at it."

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