

SPORTS

Diocesan teams claim bonanza of soccer victories

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Has there ever been a finer collective moment for Catholic high-school soccer teams in Monroe County?

All six squads qualifying for Section 5 play — the Aquinas Institute boys and girls, Bishop Kearney's boys and girls, McQuaid Jesuit's boys and Our Lady of Mercy's girls — have earned spots in their respective final fours.

Leading the way were the Aquinas boys, who are back in the Class BB title game for the first time since earning the crown in 1992. Third-seeded AQ won 4-0 over No. 6 Newark Oct. 25, and went on to a 2-0 win over No. 2 Victor Oct. 27. The Little Irish, with a 14-4 record, face No. 1 Pittsford Mendon in the 7 p.m. title game Nov. 2, at Byron-Bergen High School.

Also advancing were the Aquinas girls, seeded No. 5 in Class BB. AQ (13-6) edged No. 4 Brighton, 2-1, in an Oct. 28 quarterfinal game. The Irish were to play No. 1 Mendon in a Nov. 1 semifinal.

Bishop Kearney's girls, (14-4-1), seeded No. 2 in Class CCC, won 3-0 over No. 7 Le Roy in Oct. 28 quarterfinal play. The Kings were to face No. 6 Wayland-Cochocton in a Nov. 1 semifinal.

The BK boys (10-9), seeded sixth in Class CC, continued their hot streak with a 2-1 quarterfinal win over No. 3 Marcus Whitman Oct. 26. Kearney was to play No. 2 North Rose-Wolcott Oct. 30.

McQuaid Jesuit (14-2-2) survived a tough Class A boys' quarterfinal, outlasting No. 6 Spencerport, 2-1, in sudden-death overtime Oct. 26. The third-seeded Knights were to play No. 2 Penfield in a Nov. 1 semifinal.

Our Lady of Mercy's girls, seeded No. 2 in Class A, were a 2-1 quarterfinal winner over No. 7 Greece Arcadia Oct. 28. The Monarchs (17-1-1) were to face No. 6 Penfield in Nov. 1 semifinal play.

Meanwhile, the Geneva DeSales girls won their first-round sectional game but were knocked out in quarterfinal play. The Saints (6-12-2), seeded No. 10 in



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Aquinas Institute's Kevin Callahan trips over Newark's Brendan Morrissey as AQ's Mark Bielaska runs over to assist during an Oct. 25 sectional game. The Little Irish dominated the Reds, 4-0.

Section 5 Class D, triumphed 1-0 over No. 7 Greenwood Oct. 24 before falling to second-seeded C.G. Finney, 2-0, in an Oct. 27 quarterfinal contest.

Ironically, the only diocesan team with a No. 1 seed made an unusually quick exit. The Elmira Notre Dame girls (13-4) lost in a Section 4 Class C quarterfinal to eighth-seeded Sidney, 1-0, in a sudden-death shootout Oct. 24. It's the first time in 10 years Notre Dame has been stopped short of the semifinal round.

Notre Dame's boys, seeded No. 10 in Class C, also exited early from Section 4 play. The Crusaders (3-10-1), lost to No. 7 Oxford, 3-0, in an Oct. 25 pre-quarterfinal.

Sectional highlights

Kevin Callahan of the Aquinas boys broke a scoreless halftime tie against Victor with 12:59 to play. Teammate Andy Weidert netted an insurance goal just 30 seconds later, and goalie Kevin Cleary made 12 saves for the shutout.

"We're gaining more confidence," Coach Gary LaPietra said. "This is the time of year you want to play your best soccer, and they're doing that."

AQ reached this year's Class BB championship round after winning just three games throughout 1994.

With 1:49 to go, Katie Gonzales scored

the comeback game-winner for the Aquinas girls. AQ had spotted Brighton a 1-0 lead until Jessica Parmalee tied the game at 3:28 to halftime.

"Brighton is a very good team," Coach Gary Page said. "We played pretty good, but it could have gone either way."

The Kearney girls used goals by Shannon Rene, Kate McIntyre and Sandy Moll to blank Le Roy. Ryan Barry made nine saves for the shutout.

BK Coach Paul Forte was pleased with his club's effort against what he considered a dangerous Knights team. "We played real solid; the defense has been really coming along," he said.

Coach Michael Karns of the Kearney boys apparently wasn't kidding when he predicted in early September, "You're going to see a big improvement about halfway through the season."

The win over Marcus Whitman put BK over the .500 level for the first time and marked the Kings' eighth consecutive triumph after a 2-9 start.

Kearney earned its semifinal date behind Jaeson Rene's game-winning goal early in the second half. Chad Mayer also scored for the Kings.

McQuaid and Spencerport were heading for a shootout, but Ryan Mooney vaulted McQ into the semifinals by scoring with :35 left in the second five-minute sudden-death overtime. Christian Garofalo scored the Knights' earlier goal, erasing a 1-0 deficit.

"Spencerport was much better than their record," McQuaid Coach Dan Schied commented. He noted that this was a pleasant reversal of last year's sectionals, when Brockport ousted McQuaid from the quarterfinals in sudden death.

Mercy halted Arcadia's upset bid with Julie Antignano's goal 10:00 into the second half. Earlier, Abby Wambach's first-half score had erased a 1-0 deficit.

"That's the difference with this year's team from teams I've coached in the past," Coach Kathy Boughton remarked. "They have the mental capacity to know they're not out of the game when they're down a goal."

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