

SPORTS

Notre Dame falls in bowl contest, 19-7

A streak of non-stop Elmira Notre Dame football successes — spanning more than two months — has finally been snapped.

Notre Dame was defeated by Delhi, 19-7, in the Section 4 Class C Bowl Game held Nov. 4 at Maine-Endwell High School. The season-ending loss was the first for the Crusaders in 1995 following nine straight wins.

Delhi, the state's second-ranked team, steadily built an advantage by scoring touchdowns in each of the first three quarters for a 19-0 edge. Notre Dame didn't score on the Bulldogs until 9:53 remained in the game, when quarterback Chris Madigan combined with Ian Lampman on an 11-yard TD pass play.

The Crusaders had entered the championship contest with a No. 8 state ranking.

Coach Mike D'Aloisio remarked that the outcome "can't take away from all the good things we've done." He noted that his club far exceeded pre-season expectations, setting a Twin Tiers (Southern Tier and northern Pennsylvania) record by scoring 360 regular-season points.

"There was no way they were supposed to be playing for a championship, let alone playing the No. 2-ranked team in the state tough," D'Aloisio said. "I don't know if I've seen a team as united as this team was."

— Mike Latona

Season ends in volleyball semis

Three diocesan volleyball teams suffered season-ending losses in Section 5 semifinal play last week.

Our Lady of Mercy went down to the wire with top-seeded Victor before falling in a Class BB girls' semifinal match Nov. 1. The fifth-seeded Monarchs were defeated by scores of 15-7, 13-15, 11-15, 15-5 and 15-12. Mercy's final record was 12-8.

Nazareth Academy, fresh off a quarterfinal win over No. 1 seed Bishop Kearney, started out strongly against No. 5 Letchworth in girls' Class CC action. However, the eighth-seeded Lasers eventually emerged on the short end of a 13-15, 15-1, 15-9, 15-13 decision Nov. 2. Nazareth concluded the most successful volleyball season in school history with a 14-10 mark.

McQuaid Jesuit, competing in the boys' Class A semifinals, dropped a 15-11, 15-5, 15-5 decision to top-seeded Gates-Chili Nov. 4. The fifth-seeded Knights (15-8) had reached the final four by winning 15-13, 15-8, 16-14 over No. 12 Pittsford in an Oct. 30 pre-quarterfinal match, and 15-11, 15-11, 15-11 over No. 4 Canandaigua in a Nov. 2 quarter final.



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Our Lady of Mercy's Cheryl Matochik (right) chases Kelly Distaffen of Greece Athena during the Class A championship game Nov. 4. The Monarchs advanced to the state quarterfinals with a 3-2 victory over the previously unbeaten and untied Trojans.

Mercy, Kearney claim soccer titles

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

For Our Lady of Mercy's Abby Wambach, playing the lead role in a sectional title game was a new experience.

Bishop Kearney's Sandy Moll, on the other hand, knows all about stepping up under title-game pressure.

Wambach not only scored two goals, but she also stepped in as goalie for the game's closing moments — stopping a penalty kick along the way — as Mercy earned a stunning 3-2 triumph over previously unbeaten Greece Athena. The Section 5 Class A championship game, pitting the No. 2-seeded Monarchs against the top-seeded Trojans, was played Saturday afternoon, Nov. 4, at Spencerport High School.

Later that evening, Moll made the difference in BK's Section 5 Class CCC title matchup against Marcus Whitman. She scored with 5:02 left in sudden-death overtime as the second-seeded Kings edged the top-seeded Wildcats, 2-1, in a game played at Wayne Central. The finish was distinctly reminiscent of the 1993 final, when Moll also netted an overtime game-winner to defeat Marcus Whitman.

Mercy will now put its 19-1 record on the line in a state quarterfinal game against a Buffalo-area opponent this weekend. Meanwhile, BK (16-4-1) was scheduled to play Warsaw in a Class C state-qualifier game Nov. 6.

While Mercy and Kearney walked away with championships, four other diocesan teams from Monroe County fell short despite strong sectional runs.

The Aquinas Institute boys, seeded No. 3 in Class BB, dropped a 3-1 decision to top-seeded Pittsford Mendon in the

title contest Nov. 2. Shane Kavanagh's first-half conversion of a penalty kick was AQ's only score as the Little Irish posted a final record of 14-5.

AQ's girls (13-7), seeded fifth in Class BB, suffered a 2-0 loss to No. 1 Pittsford Mendon in a Nov. 1 semifinal game. The outcome was a reversal of these clubs' Sept. 25 meeting, when the Little Irish downed the Vikings 3-2 in overtime.

The McQuaid Jesuit boys (14-3-2), seeded third in Class A, were nipped by No. 2 Penfield, 2-1 in sudden-death overtime, in a Nov. 1 semifinal. The Knights were unable to hold a 1-0 lead they took on a second-half penalty kick by Christian Garofalo.

The Kearney boys (10-10), seeded No. 6 in Class CC, lost 3-2 to No. 2 North Rose-Wolcott in an Oct. 30 semifinal. Eric Lansing and Mike Gibbs scored for the Kings, who saw their eight-game winning streak come to an end.

Mercy 3, Athena 2

Seemingly invincible Greece Athena entered last Saturday's game with a 19-0 record. The Trojans had only permitted four goals all year up to that point, but even when they took an early 1-0 lead, Mercy was not fazed in the least.

The Monarchs' Tricia Raniewicz scored with 32:44 remaining in the first half to make the score 1-1. Then Wambach put Mercy up 3-1 at halftime, heading in a free kick by Julie Antignano with 18:04 remaining and adding a penalty kick with 7:19 to go.

Athena closed to within 3-2 with 25:44 left in the game when Paula Listrani scored. The Trojans then had a chance to force overtime when Listrani was awarded a penalty kick with only 1:23 to go in

regulation.

At that point, Wambach was inserted into goal — even though she had never played the position in a varsity game.

Wambach, a sophomore third-year starter, said she welcomed the chance to be thrown into a do-or-die situation.

"I can take the pressure really well," stated Wambach, who also scored the Monarchs' winning goal — 12 seconds into sudden-death overtime — in a 3-2 semifinal victory over sixth-seeded Penfield Nov. 1.

"Abby's the best athlete in Rochester, and I thought it would psych (Listrani) out a little bit," Coach Kathy Boughton explained.

The strategy worked, as Listrani tapped the penalty kick straight at Wambach and into her hands.

A few seconds later, the Monarchs were celebrating their second Class A title win over Athena in the past three years. Mercy also avenged its only regular-season loss — 3-1 to the Trojans Oct. 7 — as well as a 6-1 defeat at the hands of Athena in a 1994 Class A semifinal.

The Monarchs' win was surprising due to the graduation losses of star striker Gina Montesano and goalie Kelly O'Neill, but the emergence of new stars like Wambach has quickly returned Mercy to the top.

BK 2, Marcus Whitman 1

Moll, a junior, overcame all sorts of adversity to score the game-winner against Marcus Whitman.

First, the 30-degree weather, which was accompanied by howling winds, snow and sleet.

"Our feet were so cold that when we went to kick the ball, it hurt," Moll remarked.

Then, Moll narrowly missed converting two good opportunities in the first of two 10-minute sudden-death periods. But she came through when it counted, placing a corner kick from Kelly Merkel just inside the left post to end the game.

"This group has shown a propensity for hanging in there and playing tough all year," Coach Paul Forte said. "I think we're a far better team than we were at the beginning of the season."

Kate McIntyre scored BK's other goal against Marcus Whitman. She also had two goals in a 6-2 semifinal win over No. 6 Wayland-Cohocton Nov. 1, while Merkel amassed three goals and one assist in that game.

Clark, Scozzafava win sectionals

Even with temperatures in the high 30s, Jeff Clark and Karen Scozzafava proved they can maintain a torrid pace.

Clark, a McQuaid Jesuit senior, won the Section 5 Class A boys' cross-country championship this past Saturday, Nov. 4. He completed the SUNY at Geneseo course in 17 minutes and 16 seconds, a solid 14 seconds ahead of runner-up Peter Munyan of Irondequoit. Also earning a top-10 finish was McQ's Steve Shaw, who placed 10th in 17:59.

Scozzafava's margin of victory was even wider than Clark's. She cruised to

the Section 5 Class CC girls' title in 19:56, while second-place Janelle Silverman of Cuba-Rushford ended up 59 seconds behind her. Scozzafava's time was also the fastest for any runner in the five girls' categories.

In team competition, McQuaid finished highest among diocesan schools by placing second in Class A. Our Lady of Mercy also recorded a high team showing, claiming third place in the girls' Class BB race. The Monarchs were led by Lyndsay Wegman and Kelly Frost, who finished fourth and sixth, respectively.

"On The Move"
coming
November 23rd.