

SPORTS

Mercy makes state final four; Kearney eliminated

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Neither wind nor rain could keep Our Lady of Mercy from returning to the state girls' soccer final four.

The Monarchs overcame brutal weather and field conditions to knock off Williamsville North, 6-2, in a state Class A quarterfinal contest. The game was held Saturday, Nov. 11, at Lewiston-Porter Central School.

With the victory, the Monarchs — ranked No. 5 in the state — have reached the state semifinals for the third time in five years. They will put their 21-1-1 record on the line against North Rockland of Section 1 in a semifinal matchup Friday, Nov. 16, at Hornell High School. The winner will play the following day at Hornell for the state championship.

Meanwhile, Bishop Kearney's girls (18-5-1) were stopped one game short of the state semis. They were eliminated by Portville, 2-0, in a quarterfinal contest held Nov. 13 at Hornell.

Mercy 6, Williamsville North 2

Monarch Coach Kathy Boughton felt pretty good about her team's odds of defeating Section 6 representative Williamsville North — until she saw the quagmire on which the game was to be held.

"They were the worst conditions we ever played in," Boughton remarked. "I felt we were a much more talented team, and we were hoping the conditions wouldn't even things out. There could have been a fluke goal."

She needn't have worried about this Mercy club, which appears capable of handling any kind of adversity that's thrown in its direction.

The Monarchs easily survived the mini-monsoon, taking a 4-0 halftime lead on two goals by Abby Wambach and one each from Julie Antignano and Katie Fitzgerald.

Second-half Mercy goals were provided by Trish Raniewicz and Mary Ellen Dzakowic as the Monarchs continued their stunning post-season success. One week prior to the Williamsville North game, Mercy had upset previously unbeaten and untied Greece Athena, 3-2, in the Section 5 Class A title game.

Now it's on to the state semis, where the Monarchs lost in 1991 and 1993 to Shenendahowa. Their Friday foe, North Rockland, comes in with a 14-3-2 record.

Portville 2, Kearney 0

Kearney was unable to recover from a slow start against Portville. The Panthers, representing Section 6, produced the game's only scoring in the first half on



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
Bishop Kearney's Janet Lansing (left) kicks the ball away from Warsaw's Faye Vitagliano during a 2-0 state-qualifier win over the Tigers Nov. 6 at Brockport High School.

goals by Sara Hemed and her sister Katie.

The contest had been postponed by two days due to unplayable conditions last Saturday.

Earlier last week, BK recorded two state-qualifier victories to earn the Section 5 bid as the Class C state representative against Portville.

The Kings, who won this year's Section 5 Class CCC crown, posted a 2-0 win over Class CC champion Warsaw last Monday, Nov.

6. Elizabeth Lipa and Katie McIntyre were the BK goal-scorers, and goalie Ryan Barry made 11 saves.

Kearney then earned the right to meet Williamsville North by edging Class C champ Bloomfield, 3-2, Nov. 8. Goals by Shannon Rene, McIntyre and Sandy Moll staked the Kings to a 3-0 lead as they survived a second-half Bombers comeback.

It was a banner year for the Kings, who advanced to state quarterfinal play for the first time in school history and achieved a No. 11 state ranking. They also captured their second sectional crown in three years.

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Scozzafava scores big at state meet

One week after earning the first Section 5 title in Nazareth Academy history, Karen Scozzafava nearly became the Lasers' inaugural state champion.

Scozzafava claimed second place at the state girls' cross-country Class C championships, held Saturday, Nov. 11, at Corning Community College. Her time over the 3.1-mile course was 19 minutes, 44 seconds, just two seconds off the first-place finish posted by Janelle Kraus of Southold-Shelter Island.

The race was largely a two-runner battle: Scozzafava's finish was 17 seconds better than third-place Stephanie Bell of Gold Spring Harbor. She also turned in the best finish of any Section 5 runner in the three state divisions. The next-fastest Section 5 time was turned in by Fairport's Shannon Smith, who ran a 20:04 to take 14th in Class A.

By finishing second last Saturday, Scozzafava significantly improved on her eighth-place finish in Class C at the 1994 state meet.

One week prior to her standout state performance, the Nazareth senior won the Section 5 Class CC title. It marked the first team or individual sectional championship ever for the Nazareth athletic program.