

DIOCESAN NEWS

McQuaid, BK, Nazareth rule the court

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Four Catholic high schools in the diocese placed basketball teams in the recent Section 5 finals, and three emerged as champions with convincing wins.

McQuaid Jesuit's boys hiked their record to 21-2 with a 90-54 rout of Canandaigua in the Class A title game on Sunday, March 3, at Rochester's Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial. The win sent the Knights into a state-qualifying contest against Gates Chili, the Class AA champion, on March 6.

The Bishop Kearney boys (15-8) captured the Class B crown, winning 57-47 over Hornell. That game was also played March 3 at Blue Cross Arena. The Kings were to play Pittsford Sutherland, the Class BB winner, in a March 6 state-qualifying game.

Nazareth Academy earned its second straight girls' Class B crown by stopping Livonia, 47-33, on March 4 at Blue Cross Arena. The Lasers (19-3) were to face Newark, the Class BB champ, in a March 6 state qualifier.

Geneva DeSales' girls (18-5) nearly won a sectional title of their own. The Saints fell just short in their Class D championship game against Canaseraga, 43-42, on March 1 at Mount Morris High School.

McQuaid 90, Canandaigua 54

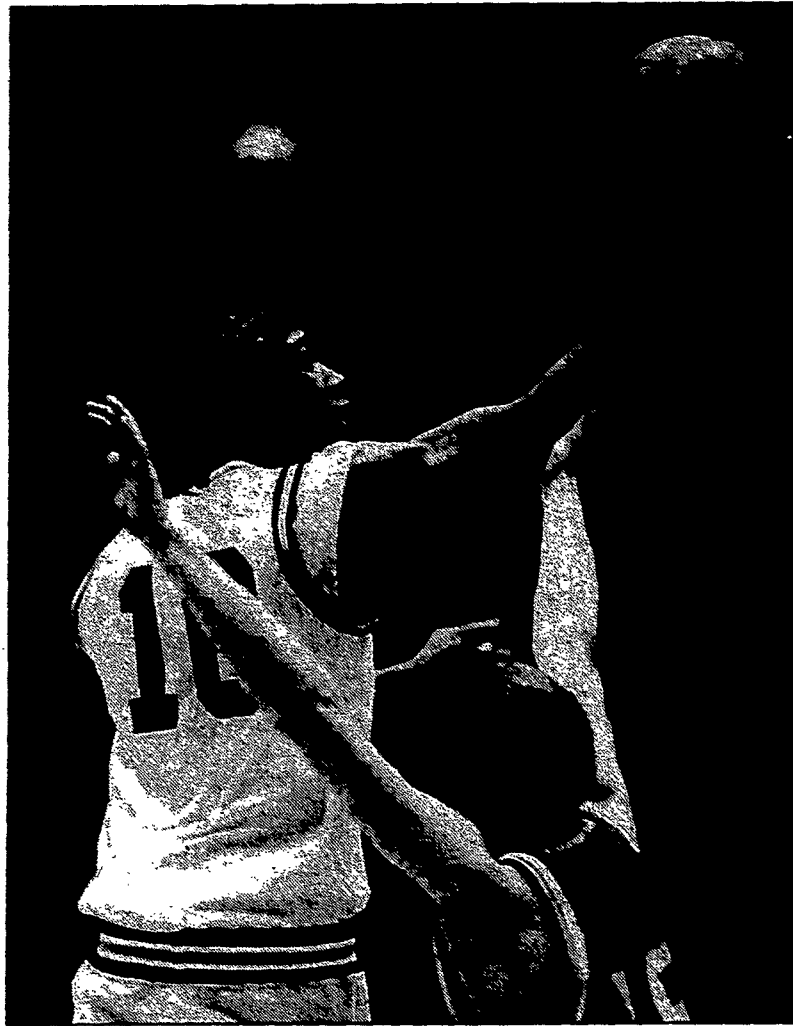
The top-seeded Knights did nothing to tarnish their No. 24 national ranking by *USA Today*. Second-seeded Canandaigua led 6-5 early, but the Braves were down 24-13 after one quarter and 53-28 at the half.

The Knights' Tyler Relph earned tournament Most Valuable Player honors, leading all scorers with 19 points. Right behind him was teammate Ryan Pettinella with 18 points, while Marty O'Sullivan scored 10 and Alfonso Evans and Jack Leasure scored eight each.

McQuaid had advanced to the championship game by winning 59-38 over No. 4 Greece Olympia in a semifinal contest on Feb. 25. Pettinella led the Knights in that game with 19 points.

Kearney 57, Hornell 47

BK, the No. 4 seed, totaled eight three-point baskets in knocking off the sixth-seeded Red Raiders. The Kings held Hornell to five second-quarter points to assume a 28-21 halftime lead, and tournament MVP Mike Williams kept Kearney on top by scoring 11 points late in the third quarter after the Raiders had closed BK's



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Bishop Kearney forward Jamar Gray (left) gets off a shot despite attempts by Hornell's Chad Winant to block him in the Section 5 Class B Basketball Championship at Rochester's Blue Cross Arena March 3. Kearney went on to win 57-47.

straight year Nazareth and Livonia have clashed in the sectional finals. The Lasers have prevailed three times — in 1999, 2001 and now 2002.

Nazareth had gained entrance to the title game with a 50-33 semifinal win over No. 4 Marcus Whitman on Feb. 27. Dahlman had a monster game that night, totaling 29 points and 13 rebounds.

Canaseraga 43, DeSales 42

Top-seeded DeSales lost a close one against No. 2 Canaseraga despite taking an early 12-5 lead. The Saints' advantage shrank to 22-20 at halftime, then a seven-point run by the Indians in the third quarter put DeSales in a do-or-die position. The Saints did rally back, and it was nip-and-tuck down the stretch before Canaseraga's Brecken York made what emerged as the game's deciding basket with 2:37 remaining. Both teams went scoreless the rest of the way, with DeSales committing five turnovers during that stretch.

DeSales' balanced scoring attack saw Kathleen Porter with 12 points, Julia Augustus with 11 and Andrea DiNieri with 10. DiNieri also had 10 rebounds.

DeSales had reached the title game with a 61-30 win over fourth-seeded Houghton on Feb. 26. Augustus (16 points), DiNieri (12) and Erin Castor (10) all scored in double figures that night.

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Williams led all scorers with 19 points while John McCauley scored 13 and Jamar Gray chipped in with 11. Williams and McCauley nailed three three-pointers each, and Gray had two.

Kearney had earned its spot in the final with a surprisingly lopsided win over top-seeded Waterloo, 57-43, on Feb. 26. Gray led the charge with 20 points and six steals, and Shawn Hall added 14 points and nine rebounds for BK.

Nazareth, 47, Livonia 33

The top-seeded Lasers motored out to a 13-3 lead after one quarter against the No. 2 Bulldogs. It was 19-12 at halftime and 35-25 after three quarters, and Nazareth held on even though its star player, Meghan Dahlman, was in foul trouble during the second half.

Dahlman, a center who is 6 feet 2 inches, had a game-high 14 points along with eight rebounds, and was named tournament MVP. Other top Nazareth scorers were Nicole Lockhart with 10 points and Brittany Husong with eight.

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Mercy skier repeats her state titles

Gabri Buerman, a junior at Our Lady of Mercy High School, has added two more state skiing titles to her collection.

Buerman won the giant slalom, posting a time of 2 minutes, 3.85 seconds, at the state championships on Tuesday, Feb. 26. She came right back the next day to earn a victory in the slalom event, finishing in 1:41.04. Both title races were held at Bristol Mountain in South Bristol.

Buerman was the defending state champion in both events. Her strong performances at the states were preceded by a first-place finish in the slalom and second place in the giant slalom at the Section 5 championships Feb. 15 at Swain, near Dansville.

Other noteworthy post-season efforts have come from:

- McQuaid Jesuit's Luke Shafer, who earned a spot in the state track and field championships by finishing second in the high jump, with a leap of 6 feet 5 inches, in the March 3 qualifying meet. The state meet is set for Saturday, March 9, in Syracuse.

- McQuaid wrestler Andy Mertel, who captured a Section 5 Class A title at 140 pounds and went on to win the state-qualifying tournament before losing in the first round of states. His final record for the season was 41-3.

- Aquinas Institute's Lindsay Malecki, who placed first in the shot put at the Section 5 Class B girls' indoor track championships.

- Elmira Notre Dame wrestlers Kyle Bowman and Mike Birmingham, who captured Section 4 Class D titles at 130 and 215 pounds, respectively.

- Aquinas Karen Rector, whose 246 game was an individual high at the Section 5 Class B girls' bowling championships.

- The Aquinas boys' bowling team, which finished second in the Section 5 Class B tournament.

— Mike Latona

Aquinas brings home championships in hockey, track

Boys' teams at Aquinas Institute have been basking in post-season success as of late, with both the hockey and indoor track squads capturing Section 5 titles.

In fact, Little Irish hockey is now poised for even bigger and better things. AQ has reached the state Division II semifinals and will play at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 9, against Clarkstown North of Section I. The winner will play for the state championship the following day against either Salmon River of Section 10 or Plattsburgh of Section 7. Both games will take place at the Utica Memorial Auditorium.

Aquinas earned a spot in the Final Four with a 6-5 quarterfinal victory over New Hartford of Section 3 on March 2 at ESL Sports Centre in Rochester. The Irish were led by two goals each from Justin Wilson and Mario Nucci, as well as single goals from Nick Guzylyak and Rick Nasca.

AQ had qualified for state play by winning its sixth consecutive Section 5 Class B championship, 3-0 over Batavia, on Feb. 23 at ESL. Nucci netted all three goals, and goalie Peter Hoskin made 14 saves for the



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

The Aquinas hockey team celebrates its 3-1 victory over the Batavia Ice Devils in the Section 5 Class B finals Feb. 23 at ESL Ice Arena in Henrietta.

shutout.

Aquinas brings a 20-7-1 record into its state semifinal game. The Little Irish were state champions in 1998 and 1999, and finished as runners-up last year.

In indoor track, Aquinas scored a decisive victory over 11 other schools at the Section 5 Class B meet, held Feb. 23 at the University of Rochester. The Little Irish amassed 117 points to only 69.5 for second-place Wilson Magnet. Individual champions were Dave Hryvniak in the 1,600- and 3,200-meter runs; Joe Wetzel in the 600 run; and John Brennan in the 45 hurdles.

Two members of that team went on to earn spots in the state championships, scheduled for March 9 at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse. Arel Gordon, who had missed sectionals due to a hamstring injury, returned to capture first place in the 55-meter run at the state-qualifying meet March 3 at Hobart College in Geneva. Also heading to states is Hryvniak, who finished third in the 3,200 at the state qualifier.

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