



Nazareth's Nicky Lewis hugs teammate Tricia Gaetano as the team celebrates their sectional championship at the Blue Cross Arena March 3.

and then went down the bench hugging each teammate. And, as if she hadn't made enough eye-catching plays already, she did two cartwheels going out to center court to receive her winner's patch.

"I feel amazing," the tournament MVP exclaimed. "It's awesome to do this your senior year."

DESALES VS. PRATTSBURGH

The Saints rallied from an early 8-0 deficit against the Vikings by going on a 10-2 run to tie the game at 10. But Prattsburgh made another big spurt, scoring 11 straight points in the second quarter to put DeSales into a 31-18 hole at half-time. From there, the Saints were unable to mount a significant second-half run.

Laura Dean was DeSales' top scorer in the championship game with 11 points. Other top Saint scorers were Krista Turnbull with 10, Rebecca Evangelista with 9 and Melissa Arena with 8.

DeSales had reached the title game by knocking off No. 2 Jasper-Troupsburg, 54-35, in semifinal play on Feb. 25. The Saints pulled away from a 25-21 halftime advantage with stellar defensive play, outscoring the Wildcats 16-7 in the third quarter and 13-7 in the final period.

Leading DeSales scorers against Jasper-Troupsburg were Andrea DiNieri with 14 points, followed by Evangelista with 10, Arena with 9 and Katie Jungjohann with 8.



DeSales High School's Melissa Arena (center) and teammate Amber Hagadorn (right) struggle for possession of the ball with Prattsburgh's Cori Rombach during the Section 5 Class D girls' basketball championship at Wayland-Cohocton High School March 1.

AQ boys win track crown

Mike Latona/Catholic Courier

Led by six first place performances, the Aquinas Institute boys successfully defended their Section 5 Class B indoor track team title on Feb. 15. The Little Irish scored 126 points to top 13 other teams at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, easily outdistancing second place Batavia's 71.5 total.

Five AQ individuals earned titles: Dave Hryvniak in the 3,200 meter run, Arel Gordon, 55 dash, Ryan Brennan, 300 dash, Jason O'Mara, shot put, and John Brennan, long jump. In addition, the 800 relay of Gordon, O'Mara, Shawn Brazas and Craig Lo Presti finished first.

Aquinas also excelled in the sectional state qualifier March 2 at the University of Rochester. The 800 relay of Gordon, O'Mara, John Brennan and Ryan Brennan placed first, and Gordon won the 50 dash. Other state qualifiers were Hryvniak, second in the 3,200, and Ryan Brennan, third in the 50 dash. The states will take place March 8 at the Carrier Dome.

Other recent standout performances came from the following teams and athletes at Catholic high schools in the diocese:

- Our Lady of Mercy skier Gabbi Buerman, who won the slalom and giant slalom in the Section 5 girls' meet.

- McQuaid Jesuit wrestler Andy Merkel, who won the Section 5 Class A title in the 160-pound weight class.

- Bishop Kearney wrestler Kyle Dunabenton, who compiled a 29-2 regular season record and placed second in the Section 5 Class C meet.

- Aquinas Institute bowler Jessica Zant, who placed first individually in the Section 5 Class B tournament.

- Aquinas hockey, which went undefeated in league play this season and had a final record of 19-1-2.

www.catholiccourier.com