

Boys Basketball

South runs away with league wins

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Williamsville South left Amherst and Lake Shore in the dust last week to snap a four-game losing skid to open the 2006-07 season.

South used an up-tempo fast break to beat Amherst, 74-49, last Tuesday and Lake Shore, 75-48, at home on Thursday to move into second place in ECIC Division II at 2-1.

South (2-4) shot 60 percent from the floor in both games, 30-for-50 against Amherst and 21-for-50 against Lake Shore.

"I felt both were must win games for us and we had good efforts offensively and defensively," said South coach Al Monaco. "To hold both under 50 points was excellent."

A huge individual reason for South's success came from 5-foot-11, 105-pound point guard Mark Coppola. The freshman had six points, five assists and no turnovers against Amherst and six points and eight assists against Lake Shore.

"He's really starting to settle in and get more confident running our fast break and it made a big difference," said Monaco. "I can see his improvement from week to week."

Both games played out similarly. South had big second quarter leads over Amherst (32-14) and Lake Shore (27-12) but with key players in foul trouble, both teams went on late runs to cut halftime deficits. Amherst went on an 8-0 run to trail 32-22; Lake Shore had the final six points of the half to make it 27-18.

The Billies answered back in the third quarter of both, scoring the first six points of the half against Amherst and dropping a season-quarter best 32 versus Lake Shore. Both teams never recovered. South led Amherst, 50-31, and Lake Shore, 59-33, by the end of the third quarters.

Frank Pieri (10 points), Adrian Wood (eight points), Coppola (six points, five assists) and Scott Steimer (five points) scored in the third against Lake Shore.

"A lot of it was due to our fast break and a lot of layup baskets in transition," said Monaco. "Our defense has been good all

year and stayed there in these games. Offensively, we stepped it up."

Amherst made two field goals in the third quarter.

"Their defense forced us into bad shots and turnovers," said Amherst coach Mike Chatelle.

Amherst had 11 second-half turnovers, the majority of them coming in the third. The Tigers had 17 turnovers overall.

South's performance against Lake Shore was more impressive. With 30 seconds left in the first quarter, South led 7-2, six points coming from Pieri. Lake Shore's Kirby Driscoll hit two three-pointers to give the Eagles an 8-7 quarter lead.

"We just bogged down on offense, had no movement and took bad shots," said Monaco.

In the second quarter, Monaco said he changed his team's offensive scheme from a four-man to five-man motion which moved Pieri out of the post and gave the rest of the team more movement. Pieri finished with 23 points and seven rebounds. He added 19 points on 9-of-15 shooting along with seven rebounds and

three blocks against Amherst.

Wood scored 24 points on 10-of-12 shooting with six rebounds and three steals against Amherst and had 19 points versus Lake Shore.

Steimer added a career-high 13 points on 4-of-5 shooting and 5-of-6 free throws against Amherst. P.J. Coppola scored seven second quarter points versus Lake Shore, including a big three that provided an offensive spark, Monaco said.

Chris France (16 points, six rebounds) and Troy Martin (14 points) scored in double-figures for Amherst. Andre Ha-keem added eight points and a couple assists.

South and Amherst hosted West Seneca East and Hamburg, respectively, on Tuesday but results were unavailable before The Bee went to press. Amherst (1-3, 0-1) travels to Newfane for a non-league game at 7 p.m. Thursday.

"We need to take care of the ball and play better defense," said Chatelle. "It's tough to give up 74 points and expect to win."

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The Rotary Club of Williamsville to sponsor Holiday Basketball Tournament

The Rotary Club of Williamsville and the Williamsville South High School Basketball Boosters Club will sponsor a Holiday Basketball Tournament December 28-29 at Williamsville South High School, 5950 Main Street.

The tournament will feature boys' varsity and junior varsity teams from Williamsville South, Williamsville North, Starpoint and Fredonia high schools.

On December 28, the JV tournament will be played at 2:30 p.m. (North-Fredonia) and 4 p.m. (South-Starpoint) followed by the varsity tournament at 6 p.m. (North-Lake Shore) and 7:30 p.m. (South-Starpoint). The consolation (2:30, JV; 6 p.m. varsity) and finals (4 p.m. JV; 7:30 p.m. varsity) will be held on Dec. 29.

"This is the third annual tournament benefiting our community," said Jerry Sheldon, Rotary chairman for the

event. "We hope to build on the success of last year's tournament and provide an entertaining annual sporting event. Our goal is to make this tournament a great holiday tradition for both athletes and spectators alike."

"It's been a huge success," added Williamsville South coach Al Monaco. "We never knew how big it was going to get when it started. Jerry Sheldon and the guys at the Rotary do a fabulous job and volunteer a lot of time and effort. The crowds at the tournament last year were bigger than the first year and we're hoping for another great tournament."

North has beaten South in the finals the past two years.

The Starpoint game has an added storyline. All of Starpoint Principal Gil Licata's kids, Rachel, just gradu-

ated, played for South's girls varsity basketball, Claire, a current junior on the South girls varsity team and Joey, an eighth grader on the South boys JV, attend South.

"It's a nice little rivalry there especially with them being a league rival in recent years," Monaco added.

The Williamsville South High Athletic Department will assist with tournament operations and the Boosters Club will run a concession stand to benefit the school's sports program. Proceeds received by the Williamsville Rotary from admissions, raffle and program will go toward student scholarships and other charitable purposes in the Amherst community.

Admission is \$2 per adult and \$1 per student. The iPod raffle is \$2 per ticket and three for \$5.

For more information, contact Sheldon at 332-5928.

MMA girls indoor track switches to club level

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Since its inception three years ago, Sacred Heart has dominated the Monsignor Martin Association's indoor track program, winning every league meet and All-Catholic event.

If the Sharks fare well this season, it will be at the club level.

Sacred Heart coach Rod Sarkovics, the brainchild behind the girls MMA indoor track program, was told by the Monsignor Martin Athletic Association Executive Committee, that indoor track would become a club sport because not enough meets could be secured for backing by the league.

Four meets were scheduled last year, including All-Catholics, at Lancaster High School's Field House, but one was snowed out. This year, two meets are scheduled at Lancaster from 2 to 4:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 20 and Feb. 3. A third meet is tentatively planned from noon to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 7 at St. Mary's of Lancaster.

"Because we cannot be a part of Section VI, we could only have three meets," said MMHSAA Executive Director Brian Kiszewski. "How can you run a season with only three meets? We had venues taken away and meets cancelled because the public school tracks are used for

the section league. It's cost prohibitive to use UB. Keeping them as club, they are still able to compete in any invitationals."

Sacred Heart, Holy Angels, St. Mary's of Lancaster, Mt. St. Mary's and Nardin are all scheduled to compete in the club league. An All-Catholic-type event will occur at one of the meets, said Sarkovics, although because it's a club sport, cannot be called All-Catholics.

Sarkovics, also Sacred Heart's Athletics Director, said girls' indoor track was going to happen at his school whether it was club or varsity.

"We were going to go ahead with indoor track one way or another," he said. "I still want to get them in meets outside of Western New York like in Rochester and have them run with a team unattached at an open meet."

"Let's face it," he continued. "There's only one varsity, JV and freshman team for basketball here and JV and varsity bowling. Even if indoor track is at the club level, the kids are doing something. Kids want to be active."

Sarkovics' team is loaded once again. Returning for the Sharks include seniors Melissa Federice (sprinter), Jackie and Jenna Piecuch (mid-distance, triple and long jump), Kerry Hurley (distance), Stephanie Smith (900, 1050), juniors Kellianne Connolly (long, triple jump), Emily Tutak (sprinter) and Kim Patterson (distance) and sophomore Melissa Naab (sprinter). Naab is returning

from knee surgery. Patterson finished second on the Sharks at this fall's cross country All-Catholics. Federice and Hurley are captains.

Patterson, Smith, and Hurley were on the team's first place 4x750 All-Catholics team last year. Smith was also on the Sharks' medley first place quartet and fourth in the 900. Tutak was second in the 900. Federice and Hurley were third in the 300 and 1500, respectively. Federice and Tutak were on the second-place 4x150 relay. Connolly was third in the triple jump and tied for fifth in the long jump.

Sophomore Christine Loftus debuts in sprint events. Sarkovics sees the distance events with Patterson, the Piecuch sisters, and Federice as the team's strengths.

"Experience will help. There's no two ways about it," he added. "I can count on the Piecuch sisters, Hurley, Smith, Federice, Tutak, and Patterson."

Sarkovics, who will primarily coach the sprinters, will be joined by assistant coaches, David (distance) and Sara Mohr (jumping).

Sacred Heart 2006-07 Schedule

1-7 St. Mary's of Lancaster noon-3 p.m. *	
1-20 Lancaster.....	2-4:30 p.m.
2-3 Lancaster.....	2-4:30 p.m.

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distance events.

The girls' sprint teams will feature Redino, Irizarry, Emily Curry, Kirby, Mikulski, Loud, and Sarah Khan, along with sophomores Amanda Sheriff and Megan Stasio and freshmen Kate Herbst and Shelby Gray.

Donathen, Frenning, Giarrappa, and Howell will throw.

North has already competed in a varsity meet at Fredonia State College and a JV meet at Lancaster High School.

"The boys will have some very big shoes to fill and are

more than willing to step up to the challenge," said Blake. "On the other hand, the girls team is coming off of one of their most competitive outdoor seasons thus far and are pumped to see what sort of mark there team can make on the indoor circuit."

North 2006-07 Schedule

12-2 at Fredonia State College.....	9 a.m.
12-22 at Fredonia State College.....	5 p.m.
12-27 weight throw exhibition/pole vault competition at Lancaster	9 a.m.
12-29 at Fredonia State College.....	9 a.m.

1-13 seventh-tenth grade championships at Fredonia State College.....	9 a.m.
1-15 WNY Relays at University at Buffalo.....	9 a.m.
1-21 at Fredonia State College.....	9 a.m.
1-27 at Lancaster High School.....	noon
2-3 at Fredonia State College.....	9 a.m.
2-10 League Championships at Fredonia State College 9 a.m.	
2-17 Varsity Invitational at Lancaster	8 a.m.
2-24 Section VI Championships at Fredonia State College 9 a.m.	