

New players step up for undefeated Spartans

by **PATRICK J. NAGY**
Reporter

Some of the names aren't the usual ones a Williamsville North hockey fan is used to hearing but the Spartans have found ways to win hockey games early in the 2007-08 season.

North (3-0) defeated Section X's Massena and Section III's Skaneateles, each by 2-1 scores, to win the L&M Financial Services Comdac Tournament held Nov. 23-24 on the Amherst Pepsi Center's Feature Rink. They also held off Sweet Home, 4-3, in its Section VI Western New York Varsity Hockey Federation opener last Thursday, also on the Pepsi Center's Feature Rink.

Sophomore James Nowicki, a defenseman who was converted to forward, scored the game-winner against Massena 3:10 into the third period unassisted.

Senior forward Josh Little (Nick Angelo) scored short-handed with 1:58 left in the second period to clinch the win against Skaneateles.

Sophomore forward Chris Marsack had the game-winner against Sweet Home with 1:22 left in the second. Marsack, who played JV last year, scored when on a face-off with Sweet Home senior forward Ryan Marko, the puck flipped past Sweet Home senior goalie Rob Castiglia and into a corner of the net.

"We're still feeling our way out on offense," said North coach Bob Rosen. "We're getting to a point where we're going to have to make tough decisions for who will see more ice time. The kids continue to work hard, which is what you always want as a coach."

Each win gave North something different to build on. Rosen said his team would have not beaten Massena had senior goalie Branden Komm not played outstand-

ing. Komm, the tournament MVP, finished with 23 saves. North had 29 shots on net.

"They took it to us in the first period and outshot us 11-6 in the second period," said Rosen. "He really had to play a good game for us to win, which he did."

Junior forward Marc Kadish (Matt Austin) scored to put North ahead 1-0. Massena tied it up on the power play when Alex Kormanos scored from Joel Laffin and Pat George.

North has also learned how to hang onto a lead. The Spartans had leads of 2-0 on Skaneateles and 4-1 versus Sweet Home and held on to win.

All-tournament selection Nick Fronczak (Angelo, Little) scored on the power play against Skaneateles 6:20 into the second period. Angelo also made the all-tournament team.

Skaneateles' Keith Buehler (Matt Wood) scored at the 1:47 mark of the third on the power play. Komm made 20 saves as North was outshot, 25-21.

A first period power-play goal off of the head of Kadish (Kyle Agius, Cam Sroda) and three second period goals — two from Little (Mark Capenhurst, Angelo; then Fronczak, Angelo), and Marsack's goal described earlier — built North's 4-1 lead before Marko scored an unassisted power-play goal with 1:09 left and added an even strength goal from junior defender Dominic Puntillo with 38 seconds remaining.

"The second period was probably the best we played so far this year," said Rosen. "We outshot them 13-4 in the second and kind of controlled play."

"We didn't quit in the third period," said Sweet Home coach Dave Gerspach. "We had some late chances to tie it but couldn't do it."

Senior Jim Cardinale (Justin Re-

ich) scored at 11:13 of the second. North outshot Sweet Home, 29-19. Komm made 14 saves through the first two periods. Senior Kim Sass stopped five shots in the third period.

Sweet Home posted a Section VI Western New York Varsity Hockey Federation-best 12-1-3 record last year but because of the league's unbalanced schedule, never faced North.

"I think the final score was a good indicator of the game," said Gerspach. "We skated with them but they were a little bit better than us."

Sweet Home's other Federation game was a 5-3 loss to Kenmore West on Sunday at Buffalo State College.

Kenmore West scored 25 seconds into the first period when senior forward Mike Boice crossed a pass that hit a Sweet Home defender and slid underneath the pads of Castiglia. A goal by senior forward Jared Passman gave the Blue Devils a 2-0 lead after the first period.

Sweet Home cut into its deficit in the second when junior forward Chris Covell scored on the power play from Marko and se-

nior forward Mike Campise and senior Rich Beaudet tallied from junior Ryan Gutt and sophomore Pat McMahon. But a goal by Kyle Whipple and two goals by Joe Coyne, one on the power play gave the Blue Devils a 5-2 advantage.

Gutt scored from Campise with 6:09 remaining in the third.

"We didn't come out and play well in the first period, took five minor penalties in the second period and came out and battled in the third period," said Gerspach.

Castiglia made 26 saves. Sophomore Chris Koester made five saves in 11 minutes of time in the third.

Kenmore West outshot Sweet Home, 31-21. Gerspach lauded the play of Kenmore West goalie Jonathan Dray.

Sweet Home (1-2-1) opened its season by tying Geneva, 2-2 on Nov. 23 and beating Notre Dame of Batavia, 7-1 on Nov. 24 to take first at the Amherst Tournament.

Sweet Home led Notre Dame of Batavia, 1-0, after the first period, 3-0 after two periods, before scoring four in the third.

Jim Cardinale got the scoring going from Campise and junior Colin Cardinale at 6:36 of the first. Junior Cam Hollinder made it 2-0 from Reich at 9:03 of the second. Marko had an unassisted goal at 1:23.

Power-play goals by Jim Cardinale (Covell, Marko) and Covell (Beaudet, Marko) and goals by Covell (Marko) and Jim Cardinale were scored in the third.

Sweet Home outshot Notre Dame, 41-16, and hit eight goal posts. Brendan Brown scored at the 4:02 mark of the third for Notre Dame.

Seniors Rich Fedele (Adam Titanic, Beaudet) and Alex Gilmour (Marko, Covell) scored for Sweet Home against Geneva. A first period goal by Aaron Fitzgerald and a power-play strike late in the third from Jeff Wadhams earned goals for Geneva. Sweet Home outshot Geneva, 40-25.

"It was a good lesson to get a tie in a game where you were the better team," said Gerspach.

Jim Cardinale was named to the all-tournament team. Marko was MVP.

e-mail: pnagy@beenews.com

North

(Continued from page 17)

past summer, Komm helped the Western Region win gold at this past summer's Empire State Games.

"He's going to have to step up and be the leader," said Rosen. "He's going to have to be our best player night in and night out."

What Rosen likes the most about Komm is his attitude.

"He loves to compete," said Rosen. "He treats practice like it's the Stanley Cup. He doesn't like to get scored on in practice. He has a tremendous work ethic and is a good kid to be around."

Komm's backup is senior Kim Sass, who started on JV as a junior. She's the second female goalie to play in the Federation. Rachel Stemerman played for Williamsville South three years ago. Stemerman plays for the women's hockey team at Wesleyan University.

For North to be successful this season, Rosen said everyone on the team will have to play their role well.

"That's something the coaching staff and I pride ourselves on," said Rosen. "Each role is as important as everyone else's. And that's whether you're only practicing with the varsity or on JV. You can't take a day off because it hurts the kids you're practicing against. Everybody has to be at their highest level in order for us to be successful."

"With the run we've been on,

I've always felt we were one of the hardest practicing teams in the state," he added.


Rosen also lauded the work of Rob Eimer on JV.

North opened its season 3-0 (see other story for results).

North 2007 Schedule


12-6 Clarence (Olympic). 9 p.m.
12-8 East (Olympic)..... 5 p.m.
12-14 Shenendehowa (Clifton Park Ice Arena)..... 8:45 p.m.
12-15 LaSalle (Hudson Valley Community College). 11:30 a.m.
12-20 Frontier (Olympic) 7 p.m.
12-22 Lancaster (Feature) 3 p.m.
12-23 Canisius (Buffalo State College)..... 1 p.m.
12-28 North at Morrisville TournamentTBA
12-29 North at Morrisville TournamentTBA
1-3 Orchard Park (Feature) 9 p.m.
1-5 Ken. West (Feature).. 3 p.m.
1-10 St. Joe's (Feature).... 7 p.m.
1-17 Lancaster (Feature). 7 p.m.
1-21 Orchard Park (Olympic) noon
1-26 South (Feature)..... 1 p.m.
1-27 Frontier (Buffalo State College)..... 1 p.m.
1-31 Canisius (Feature)... 7 p.m.
2-2 Clarence (Olympic)... 5 p.m.
2-7 Ken. West (Olympic). 9 p.m.
2-9 Amherst (Feature)..... 1 p.m.
*All games are played at the Amherst Pepsi Center Feature and Olympic Rinks unless otherwise noted.

e-mail: pnagy@beenews.com



**\$0 Monthly Plan
Premium Options**


Enroll right over the phone!
(716) 635-4900
www.independenthealth.com



Millie
Independent Health Member

My Medicare RedShirt[™] expert gave me extra benefits. At no extra cost.*

- No Deductible**
for prescription drugs.
- One-time Copay**
for inpatient hospitalization per year.
- Dental Plans[™]**
with one of the lowest rates in the area.
- Healthy Benefits**
like the SilverSneakers[®] Fitness Program, Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, Weight Watchers[®], and more.



You Deserve the RedShirt Treatment[™]

NEW Medicare Information Centers open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday–Friday and 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. on Wednesdays. Seminars at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday–Thursday at all locations. Free gift and refreshments for attending.† Free flu shots every Friday 10 a.m.–2 p.m.†† Call (716) 635-4900 for reservations. Other seminars are also available in your neighborhood.

<p>Youngmann Plaza (BJ's Wholesale Plaza) Young Street Tonawanda, NY 14150</p>	<p>Tops Plaza (Near Tim Hortons) 3223 Southwestern Blvd. Orchard Park, NY 14127</p>
<p>Ellicott Creek Plaza (Across from Zebb's) 2882 Niagara Falls Blvd. Amherst, NY 14228</p>	<p>Valu Plaza (Across from Wegmans) Dick Road and George Urban Blvd. Cheektowaga/Depew, NY 14043</p>

Independent Health is a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract. A sales representative will be present to assist with information and applications. For accommodations of persons with special needs at sales meetings, please call (716) 635-4900 or 1-800-958-4405. TDD users call (716) 635-4840.

* Benefits vary by plan ** Dental Plan is not a Medicare Advantage benefit and an additional premium will apply
† Exceptions may apply †† With no obligation H3362/H3344/H9519 C1048REV2 09/2007 ©2007 Independent Health Association, Inc.