

Churchill, Wayne contend for title

By Brad Emons
staff writer

With a 65-0 record, it's apparent that Holland West Ottawa is the team to beat this weekend in the state Class A volleyball tournament.

But seven other teams, including Ohsweverland, hopefulls, Livonia Churchill (44-1-1) and Wayne Memorial (41-5), will arrive Friday at Kalamazoo's Nazareth College primed for the upset.

Wayne, a tournament-tested club with a second place finish behind Churchill in the always formidable Schoolcraft College Invitational, is making its second straight appearance in the final eight.

The Zebras, led by 6-foot hitting star Brandon Caineross, will not be in awe to the top-ranked Panthers, who have been beaten only three games this season.

"They know the competition," said coach Ann Kolnitsky after her team breezed past Lincoln Park (15-4, 15-3) last Saturday in the Wayne regional.

"I'm not going to keep it a secret. I think we have the ability to step up the competition. We did at Schoolcraft where we saw a lot of good teams. Last year we had three sophomore starters and the juniors who played last year are a year older. We're definitely stronger."

DESPITE AN OVERALL record of 44-5 last season, Holland West Ottawa played second fiddle to eventual state champion East Kentwood. The 'A' champs administered five of West Ottawa's six losses.

"We consider ourselves the new

volleyball

coach on the block." West Ottawa coach Steve Myers said. "This is a very mature team, the seniors are very hungry."

All-Stater Jodi Sprick, a 6-1 senior, supplies the hitting power for Holland West Ottawa.

Before her career is over, Sprick will have earned 12 varsity letters. She also plays softball and basketball.

"She should be O.K. Conference Female Athlete of the Year," said Holland Sentinel Sports Editor Leo Martini. "She's an outstanding shortstop and very good basketball player."

Erika Wade, a third-team All-Stater, is a talented 5-9 senior. Setter Laurie Navas is the team's spark-plug.

In the regional last weekend at Grandville, the Panthers escaped with an 11-15, 16-14, 15-13 triumph over Portage Northern.

"WE HAD TO count our lucky stars to get by them," Myers said. "It was a very tough match."

Myers characterizes his team as having "a lot of quickness, but we're definitely not big."

"We have some good jumpers and some good athletes," Myers said. "But we have to play smart and take advantage of what our opponent gives us. We have to play our game

and hopefully things will work out."

While Wayne faces a tough opening-round foe, Churchill is very familiar with quarterfinal opponent Grosse Pointe South (35-4).

South advanced last weekend out of its own regional with a 15-2, 15-11 triumph over Detroit Central.

Churchill, meanwhile, downed city rival Stevenson, avenging its only loss of the season against the Spartans in the regional final at Ferndale, 15-13, 15-3.

THE CHARGERS, have to be considered a favorite to win their opening-round match after beating Grosse Pointe South in January at the Wayne State Invitational, 15-1, 15-2.

"That was a long time ago (Jan. 26)," Churchill coach Mike Hughes cautioned. "We were very pumped up that day and I don't know if they had all their kids there. Somebody mentioned, as I recall, something about taking the ACT test."

If the Chargers can get by the Blue Devils, they'll return to action at 10 a.m. Saturday in the semifinals to face the winner of the Birmingham-Marian-Bay City Central quarterfinal match.

Depth may well determine the final outcome of the tournament.

The Chargers did not miss a beat last week despite the absence of starter Keri Hawkins, who was attending her brother's wedding.

"The fact that we were able to put some juniors in there with Keri out says something," Hughes said. "But we have six experienced seniors tied

by Christina Garry and Alyssa Bealier who have really improved during tourney time. I don't know how the kids are going to react. Every group is different, but so far, when we've had to play somebody tough, we've picked up our play a notch."

HUGHES SAID there are a lot of parallels between the current team and final four qualifiers of 1976 and '79, when such names as Leigh Freeman, Linda Mox, Gail Oja, Stacey O'Toole and Julia Brubaker nearly led Churchill to a state championship.

"The teams are very similar in a lot of ways," he said. "Both teams were not very big, with no serious weaknesses to speak of."

Those girls (1976-79) were ferocious competitors, but this team is more of an offensive team. They're not quite as big, but maybe they're better blockers."

The Chargers may rate as high as No. 2 in the eight-team field after finishing ahead of three others. A quarterfinalists at the Schoolcraft Tournament.

Wayne, meanwhile, ranked by underestimates. The Zebras beat quarterfinalists Temperance-Bedford (32-16) and Marian (37-6-5) en route to the Schoolcraft finals before losing to Churchill.

"We may have been ranked No. 1 all year, but it's wide open," said Myers, the West Ottawa coach. "I was talking to Bud Cole, the East Kentwood coach and he said, 'Watch out for Churchill.' He came away very impressed with them."

and it is in the first game before regrouping and doing a job of Stevenson as the host. The Chargers won a straight point in period 15 and never surrendered the lead. They weren't threatened in the second game, scoring 20 of the first 24 points and finishing the road on a kill in senior Christina Garry.

Garry and Alyssa Bealier, an other senior, led Churchill at 15-11, 15-13, respectively, in the title match, and the pair combined for six blocks at the net. Bealier had 14 ace sets and the Chargers also set up play out of seniors Jamie Sprick and Stephanie Peterson.

Junior Julie Campana contributed seven kills, but it was the Chargers' overall senior leadership that made the difference, Hughes said.

The biggest advantage we have over Stevenson is we have five and a half six senior athletes," Hughes said. Bealier, Oja and Julie Freeman are the seniors. Bealier is a very fine athlete but often a touch explosive. Next point it will be to his advantage.

Churchill beat Stevenson twice the three times the teams met this year, including twice in the Western Lakes Volleyball Association championship match. The Spartans only won once during the regular season in a best three-out-of-five match.

Thursday, March 14, 1991 O&E

(F50)

Rice runner-up in state tourney

By Marty Budner
staff writer

Brother Rice coach Mike Brown musted it was simply a couple bad breaks — and not the dreaded jinx — which cost his team its first ever Class A state hockey championship.

The Warriors had defeated Trenton twice during the regular season in Metro Conference play by a combined score of 5-1. The commonly feared syndrome suggests it's tough to beat a team three times in one season.

Unfortunately for the Warriors, whether they believed it or not, that jinx caught up with them in the state finals at the Flint IMA Arena Saturday evening.

BROTHER RICE and Trenton matched each other early on goal for goal but the Trojans took over in the third period and skated away with a 6-3 victory. It marked Trenton's fifth state championship since the inception of the state tournament back in 1975.

Brown selected over the week-

end as the Class A coach of the year by the Michigan High School Hockey Coaches' Association.

tailed about that disappointing third encounter shortly after accepting the Class A state runners-up trophy.

"There's no jinx. You throw that all out the window in the final game — it's all adrenalin and who gets the right breaks," said Brown, whose team finished the season with a 20-6-1 overall record.

"They got a couple of rebound goals and a couple screen shots which just flattered in," he said. "I don't know how their third goal went in."

"There were five black (three jerseys and two white jerseys) standing there. That one had eyes. We had the 3-2 lead and that tied the game. It came in the last two minutes of the period."

If we could have walked into the third period with the lead I think we would have been all right," he said. That's just the break of the game."

Trenton's obvious game plan was to little up Rice's senior center Chris Freeman, who scored three goals against the Trojans the last time they played Trenton captain Greg Obrycki was assigned the tough task of shadowing Rice's leading scorer and did a credible

hockey

job. Freeman scored once but was held in check throughout most of the game.

STEVE MORROW opened the scoring for Brother Rice at the 1:15 mark of the first period. Less than a minute later, Trenton tied the game when Joe Bazzner slapped home a 15-footer directly off a face-off won by Obrycki.

In the second period, Trenton's Sean Slater scored a power-play goal in a 4-on-3 situation. Just over a minute later, Rice tied the game on a slap shot from the right point by Greg Sharbaugh. Again, in less than a minute span, Freeman scored for Rice and Rip Repetski countered for Trenton late in the second period.

The teams were tied 3-3 going into the final period. Early in that third period, Trenton's Paul Withee poked home a rebound to put his team up 4-3.

Everyone waited for the Rice counter, but it never came.

Instead, it was Withee who extended Trenton's lead to 5-3 seven minutes into the period.

Rice threatened on a couple of occasions but could not score. Brown pulled Rice goalie Derek Billis with 1:11 left in the game for an extra attacker. Rice never really mounted a decent attack, but the momentum and Trenton's Obrycki — a thorn in Rice's side all evening — tied the game with the empty-net tally.

It was a tough pill to swallow for the Warriors, who were making their first ever appearance in a state championship game.

"Our guys came ready to play and it was a hell of a hockey game," said Brown. "It went back-and-forth, back-and-forth, back-and-forth. We just gave up a rebound goal in the third period and that kind of hurt."

It's a learning experience, Trenton's been there before and they know how to win it. We told our guys we'll be back."

They came out and they definitely deserved this victory," he said. "Every time we get a goal they come back. That last We let up and you can't do that against Trenton."

Chargers defeat city rival in regional

Mercy eliminated

Continued from Page 1

ended like it did, but you can't take anything away from a great season."

Sopko is already looking forward to next year. The Lakets only lost four seniors and this year's JV squad went 20-1.

"I'm really looking forward to the future," Sopko said. "We will definitely miss the seniors, but with the girls that are coming back and the strong JV team I'm excited about the future."

By Steve Kowalski
staff writer

Along about the same time Keri Hawkins was slugging up in her brother's wedding Saturday, her Livonia Churchill teammates converged to be the bridesmaids at the Ferndale High Class A volleyball regional.

Churchill, playing without Hawkins, beat Livonia Stevenson 15-13, 15-3 in the final to earn a berth in Friday's quarterfinal at Nazareth College in Kalamazoo.

The regional title was the first for Churchill coach Mike Hughes since 1979 when he guided the Chargers to the Class A finals before losing to Warren Cusum.

The Chargers were dedicating this victory to Hawkins, as well as a contest to play but couldn't because of her personal obligations.

She wanted to be here so bad but she couldn't. So we will let her. She said her first thing Sunday morning," said other Amy Barton, one of six Churchill seniors. "This feels great. I've been waiting for this since my freshman year. I think we can win it all if we play our hardest and best and stick together as a team."

CHURCHILL, WHICH improved to 44-1-1 overall, trailed 4-0

CHURCHILL, WHICH improved to 44-1-1 overall, trailed 4-0

WE'RE MOVING SALE

On March 23, when we move out of our Novi & Taylor Stores, we don't want to truck anything along. Act now for super wall-to-wall savings --- especially on fall and winter items.

WearGuard is America's leading supplier of work clothing and uniforms.

Incredible savings on a selection of famous name brands like Lee, Timberland, Carhartt, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's - and one name you won't find anywhere else - WearGuard.

Novi & Taylor

WearGuard

Tough Clothes for Rough Work

SAVE Up To 60%!

SAVE 50-60%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 50-60%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 20-60%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 30-75%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 30-60%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 20-40%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 30-40%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 30-60%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 20-50%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 40-60%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's
SAVE 25-30%	Lee, Carhartt, Timberland, Herman, Woolrich, Levi's

Visit Any of These Stores to See Our Exciting New Spring Line! Jackets, Pants, Shirts, Rainwear... and More!

Dearborn, 14000 Michigan, Ford Rd between Michigan & Greenfield 313-427-4222

Roseville, Granger Center, 41000 Granger Center Rd 913-234-8282

Westland, Westland Commons, Wayne & Warren Roads 734-525-0407

Troy, 550 John R. Road, West to Six Mile, 313-588-8562

Plus, when you purchase at the Novi & Taylor Store you get a **25% Off coupon** good on your next regular priced purchase (including Personalization and Special Orders) at any of our other stores!

Excludes sale items and items already on sale. Not valid with other offers. Items marked down may have been taken.

Sale Locations:

Novi WearGuard Store

Novi Town Center, 196 & Novi Road (313) 349-2310

Taylor WearGuard Store

Eureka Road (across from Southland Mall) (313) 287-4150

Store Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday 10-6, Thursday and Friday, 10-9