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Sports notes from across the Archdiocese

Sports Columnist
By John Knebel

Cleaning out a notebook on a cold winter day ...

There must be something nutritious in the water up in Bucks County.

For the first time in eight years, Archbishop Wood's girls' swimming team defeated Archbishop Ryan. The 107-63 Catholic League victory had Wood's 11-year coach Charlie Stillwell beaming.

"They did a great job," said Stillwell, a Wood graduate. "I don't think you could have asked them for any more. I'm really proud of what they accomplished."

Leading the way for the high school from Warminster was senior Christina Rios. In addition to helping the 200 medley and 400 freestyle medley teams finish first, Rios also captured the 100-yard backstroke and the 100-yard freestyle events.

Stillwell said a performance such as Rios' displayed the leadership by an upperclassman that is so necessary in any sport, particularly in swimming.

"Confidence is so important," said Stillwell. "When you believe in your ability, it feeds off from one swimmer to the others."

Meanwhile, Conwell-Egan of Levittown kept itself alive in the Catholic League Northern Division boys' basketball playoff race Monday night with an exciting, 52-50 victory over Father Judge.

In defeating the Crusaders on the road for the first time in seven seasons, the Eagles improved their league record to 4-4 while the Crusaders dropped to 5-3. A loss would have dealt a severe blow to the Eagles' chances of reaching the post-season.

Hayk Gyokchyan buoyed the victors by scoring a game-high 21 points. But it was teammate Jonas Skovdal who nailed the game-winning shot with 12 seconds left in regulation to finish with 12 points.

Not to be outdone, Archbishop Wood's boys' basketball team celebrated its first league victory of the season thanks to a 55-49 triumph over Bishop McDevitt. Tim Fahy's 20 points – 12 on four three-point shots – proved to be the major difference in the Vikings' second-half comeback. Teammate Sean McCartney contributed three treys and 16 points to the win, and Dan Comas added 11 points and nine rebounds.

Finally, Holy Ghost Prep of Bensalem eked out a huge 54-52, Bicentennial League win over host Girard College in a contest between two teams that had entered undefeated in league play and with superb overall records of 15-2 and 12-2, respectively.

The Firebirds seemed to be heading toward an easy victory before Girard erased a 13-point deficit in the final four minutes of the fourth quarter.

But Bob Lantzy saved the day for Holy Ghost when he took a feed from Mike Byrne and banked home a game-winning shot with two seconds left in regulation play.

"Coach (Tony Chapman) told me to go to the basket, and that's what I did," said Lantzy, who received a hero's embrace by players and fans after the buzzer. "I thought I might get fouled, so I just took it strong." Chapman deflected any coaching praise back to his players.

"Our kids are smart and know what to do," said Chapman. "We really don't have someone you would call a 'go-to guy.' If they're open, they know they can take the shot."

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