Cardinal Hayes Claims Archdiocesan Basketball Championship

By DAN PIETRAFESA

oe Toussaint collected 27 points, eight rebounds and seven assists, leading the Cardinal Hayes High School boys' basketball team to the archdiocesan championship with an 86-65 victory over St. Raymond at Mount St. Michael Academy in the Bronx Feb. 23.

Cardinal Hayes won its first archdiocesan championship since 2016. The Cardinals captured the CHSAA Class AA state title in 2017.



"We are excited about winning the title again," Cardinal Hayes coach Joseph Lods told CNY. "Our league is rich in

tradition as well as our school and basketball program. I am proud of our student-athletes."

Toussaint, a four-year member of the varsity team, has accepted a scholarship to play at the University of Iowa.

"He played a dominant game on both ends of the floor, and we are very fortunate to have a player of his magnitude," Lods said.

Cardinal Hayes, 22-5 overall, held a 40-35-halftime lead before using a 21-8 third-quarter run to take control of the game.

Jaylen Murray scored 18 points, and Shemani Fuller added 17 points for the Cardinals.

Cardinal Hayes and St. Raymond are competing in the CHSAA Varsity AA Playoffs at Fordham University. The quarterfinals are Sunday, March 3, with the semifinals and final scheduled for Thursday, March 7, and Sunday, March 10.

Two win state federation wrestling titles — Msgr. Farrell's Jimmy Ryan and Iona Prep's AJ Kovacs won their respective weight classes to claim New York State federation championships in Albany Feb. 22-23.

Ryan, seeded second, decisioned fourth seed Sean Carter of North Babylon, 3-0, for the 120-pound title. The senior, who surrendered only two points in winning all four of his bouts at the state tournament, defeated Port Chester's Ivan Garcia, 1-0, in his semifinal bout.

"He was very good defensively and he's very very tough," said Msgr. Farrell coach Peter Hamm. "He worked hard all season and in the off-season, and it really paid off for him."

Kovacs, seeded second, beat top seed Jonathan Spadafora of Half Hollow Hills East by a 3-2 decision in the 145-pound final to avenge his only loss of the season in 51 bouts. The senior, who recorded a 6-0 victory over Rocky Point's Kris Ketchum in a semifinal match, finished 4-0 with one pin for the tournament.

Kovacs set school records in 2018-2019 with 50 wins and 33 pins.

"It was truly a great accomplishment for AJ," said Iona Prep wrestling coach Tom Straehle. "AJ is the hardest working athlete I know. After practice with the team at Iona Prep, he will then go to his club practice for another two hours and still keeps his grades up."

At 195 pounds, Iona Prep's Matt Kelly took third place by defeating East Ramapo's Jhordyn Innocent, 6-0. Kelly completed his junior season with a 46-5 record.

"Matt beat an opponent for third place that beat him earlier in the season, which shows great resolve," Straehle said.

At 113 pounds, Msgr. Farrell's Terry Adams, a state federation champion at 106 pounds last season, placed fourth. The senior lost 5-4 to eventual state Greg Diakomihalis of Hilton in a semifinal.

"Terry had the No. 1 kid in the country in his weight class and lost to him in the semifinals," Hamm said. "He had the toughest weight class in the tournament."



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