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HIGH SCHOOLS

Basketball season's final stretch looms

Mitch Stephens, Special to The Chronicle

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

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(02-08) 21:36 PST -- Postseason basketball is two weeks away and here is some of what we know:

-- Boys teams with legitimate state-title hopes, in order, are: Salesian-Richmond (Division IV), Bishop O'Dowd-Oakland (Division III), St. Francis (Division II) and St. Joseph Notre Dame-Alameda (Division IV).

Salesian is the defending champ, though Price of Los Angeles has a longer collection of top-end talent. O'Dowd will go as far as its backcourt takes it. St. Francis is deep, relentless and improving rapidly.

-- The NorCal Division I boys title race has never been so wide open, with as many as six Metro-area teams in contention, led by Newark Memorial, De La Salle-Concord and San Ramon Valley-Danville. Whichever NorCal team prevails will be a heavy underdog.

-- Girls teams with legitimate state-title hopes, in order, are: Pinewood-Los Altos Hills (Division V), Eastside Prep-East Palo Alto (Division V), Berkeley (Division I), O'Dowd (Division III), Mitty (Division II), Carondelet-Concord (Division II) and St. Mary's-Berkeley (Division IV).

The problem for locals is that numerous nationally ranked teams wait on the Southern California end of the bracket. O'Dowd is the area's top team but must dethrone national No. 1 St. Mary's-Stockton in NorCals. That leaves the Metro's top small-school squads with the best shot to win it all.

-- Boys player of the year nominations: **Desmond Simmons** (Salesian), **John McArthur** (De La Salle), **Tyler Johnson** (St. Francis), **Roderick Bobbitt** (Castro Valley), **MacKenzie Moore** (College Park-Pleasant Hill), **Ivan Dorsey** (Riordan) and **Brandon Ashley** (O'Dowd).

Simmons, who is Washington-bound, and McArthur, a Santa Clara signee, are clearly the leaders. Bobbitt and Moore, both juniors, do much more than score.

-- Girls player of the year nominations: **Brittany Boyd** (Berkeley), **Mikayla Lyles** (O'Dowd), **Erica Payne** (Carondelet), **Saidah Allen** (Piedmont), **Hailie Eackles** (Pinewood), **Janelle Travis** (Justin-Siena-Napa), **Eilise O'Connor** (St. Ignatius), **Stephanie Golden** (Miramonte-Orinda), **Kamilah Jackson** (Sacred Heart Cathedral) and **Hallie Meneses** (Lincoln).

This is an absolutely wide-open race. Boyd makes her team better in ways beyond the 20 points per game she's capable of scoring. Piedmont shows Allen averaging 25.1 points and 24.3 rebounds per game.

-- Boys coach of the year nominations: **Steve Compagno** (Redwood-Larkspur), **Bret Page** (Analy-Sebastopol), **John Raynor** (San Ramon Valley), **Craig Ashmore**

(Newark Memorial), **Bill Mellis** (Salesian) and **Frank Allocco** (De La Salle).

Compagno's team is 22-2 and clinched a share of its first league title in 31 years Saturday. After a surprising North Coast Section title last year, Page has Analy at 22-1. Though Salesian is the defending champ, Mellis had two starters transfer.

-- Girls coach of the year nominees: **Sue Phillips** (Mitty), **Doc Scheppler** (Pinewood), **Ron Hirschman** (Monte Vista-Danville), **Doug Vanderhorst** (Dougherty Valley-San Ramon) and **Mark Bucklew** (Northgate-Walnut Creek).

Scheppler's team has been ravaged by injury, but is still the state's top-ranked team in Division V. No one teaches more or inks a tougher schedule than Phillips. Vanderhorst has a second-year program at 20-2.

Football news: The California Interscholastic Federation announced Monday that the state bowl games will remain at the Home Depot Center in Carson (Los Angeles County) for the next three years. ... **Paul Perenon**, with a 209-75-2 record and three section titles, has been relieved of his head-coaching duties at Bishop O'Dowd. Perenon is fighting the decision. ... De La Salle running back **Terron Ward**, The Chronicle's Player of the Year, accepted a grayshirt scholarship offer from Oregon State on Friday. ... Pittsburg safety **Erick Dargan** picked Oregon over UCLA and Washington State and signed his letter of intent Wednesday.

CHRONICLE TOP 20 BOYS BASKETBALL

Team	W-L	Last
1. Salesian	20-1	1
2. Bishop O'Dowd	19-3	2
3. Newark Memorial	21-3	3
4. St. Francis	20-2	4
5. De La Salle	20-2	5
6. San Ramon Valley	20-2	6
7. Serra	20-3	9
8. Castro Valley	18-4	8
9. Bellarmine	19-3	7
10. Analy	22-1	10
11. St. Mary's	16-6	11
12. Redwood	22-2	12
13. Campolindo	19-4	13
14. Oakland	12-9	14
15. El Cerrito	20-2	15
16. St. Joseph ND	19-5	16
17. St. Pat-St. Vincent	20-3	17
18. Heritage	18-4	19

19. Cardinal Newman	19-4	NR
20. Mitty	14-8	NR

CHRONICLE TOP 20 GIRLS BASKETBALL

Team	W-L	Last
1. Bishop O'Dowd	19-3	1
2. Berkeley	19-3	2
3. Mitty	18-5	3
4. Carondelet	17-5	4
5. St. Mary's	20-3	6
6. Dougherty Valley	20-2	7
7. Northgate	19-3	9
8. Pinewood	17-5	10
9. Miramonte	17-5	5
10. Dublin	18-5	8
11. Valley Christian	16-3	14
12. Deer Valley	16-6	15
13. Piedmont	18-6	13
14. Eastside Prep	18-4	12
15. St. Ignatius	15-7	11
16. Monte Vista	18-4	19
17. Justin-Siena	21-3	17
18. Campolindo	16-7	18
19. Marin Catholic	17-6	20
20. Drake	19-4	16

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hshoopfanatic 2/9/2010 10:32:43 AM

The fact that Chuck Rapp isn't on your nomination for coach of the year is beyond me. He has the same players from a 3-11 team last year, only to be one game out of first place in the competitive WCAL. Frank Alloco is on your list, and Serra beat De La Salle at DLS in the Chris Vonture tournament this year for the first time in school's history (again, with the same line up as last year's 3-11 team). 2 out of 3 losses are to 2 top 20 teams (St. Francis/Mitty).

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