

## SECTION II BASEBALL

## Tedesco a gem for Mohonasen

*Senior fans 14 as Warriors end long title drought*

BY JIM SCHILTZ *Gazette Sportswriter*

TROY — Robert Tedesco and Mohonasen's underdog baseball team made good on a second opportunity.

Tedesco pitched a complete game with 14 strikeouts, and the Mighty Warriors pushed across a couple of early runs in a 2-1 Section II Class A championship-game victory over Rotterdam rival Schalmont Friday at Joseph L. Bruno Stadium.

"Last year, we were in this position and we lost," said Tedesco, referring to Mohonasen's 9-2 setback against Ichabod Crane. "I never forgot that."

Jacob Papa and Lucas Flood knocked in runs to back Tedesco, with Flood's two-out double breaking a 1-1 tie in the third inning. Tedesco threw up five zeros after that, escaping threats in the sixth and seventh, to complete Mohonasen's first title run since 1982.

"This team is brand new, except for a couple of people, and we struggled at times, but I told them, it's not how you start the race. It's how you finish," said Mohonasen coach Jim Huggins. "We went 0-and-3 to end the regular season. I told my guys we can go 3-and-0 in the sectionals."

Mohonasen made the Class A tournament field as the No. 8 seed, getting in not on record, but because eight teams were necessary to compete by Section II rule. The Mighty Warriors went 4-12 in Suburban Council play and 7-13 overall before knocking off No. 1 seed Lansingburgh, 4-2; No. 4 Ichabod Crane, 2-0; and a No. 3 Schalmont (19-7) team that put up 13 runs in a semifinal triumph over Glens Falls.

"We squeaked in, and to win it, it feels so good," said Flood.

"We were the No. 8 seed, and no one thought we could win. Not even the people in school thought we could win," said Tedesco. "We played with a lot of energy and never quit. This is one great feeling."

The Siena College-bound righty struggled in last year's title-game loss to Ichabod Crane, allowing nine hits and six runs over five innings after picking up a win and a save in two previous sectional outings. He gave up six singles Thursday to outduel Joe Amorosi, who surrendered four hits, and only one after the third inning, in a strong effort.

"We didn't have a lot of hits, but they were big hits," Huggins said. "We had key hits, and we had great pitching."

"We had faith in Teddy," Flood said of Tedesco, who picked up the win against Lansingburgh. "He's come through for us all year."

The victory gave Mohonasen three major sport Section II championships this school year, with its boys' soccer and girls' basketball teams also taking Class A honors. The soccer title also came at Schalmont's expense.

"Being the underdog, that was their motivation," Huggins said. "This was hard to do, especially against the teams we played. It wasn't an easy ride here."

Dominick Bianchi tripled to deep center to start Mohonasen's second inning and raced home on Papa's single. Schalmont tied the game in the bottom half when Connor Hart drew a one-out walk, Joe Palumbo reached on an error and Chris Hotaling singled Hart home. An infield single by Kyle McKelvey loaded the bases after that, and Tedesco turned a come-backer into an out at home before fanning Amorosi.

Schalmont mounted another threat in the sixth when Brian Constantino singled and took third on a sacrifice bunt and a grounder, and Tedesco ended it by fanning Hotaling.

McKelvey singled to open the seventh and advanced to second on a wild pitch before Tedesco struck out the side for the third time, getting Chris Harrington, Amorosi and Joe Bergami.

"When McKelvey got the single off me, I said to myself, 'I've got to bear down,'" Tedesco said. "I wasn't going to lose this two years in a row."

"Mentally, he was in the game, and he had great stuff," Huggins said of his ace. "He had 14 strikeouts against a quality team. I can't say enough about him."

Tedesco also struck out the side in the third and fourth, and issued four walks. McKelvey had two singles, and Amorosi fanned five and walked two in Schalmont's bid for its second title in four years.

"We wanted to play Schalmont. They're our rival," said Tedesco. "Everything fell in place."

Mohonasen has a regional bye Monday and will play Tuesday against either Massena at SUNYCanton (4:30 p.m.) or Mexico at Alliance Stadium in Syracuse (7 p.m.).

Mohonasen 011 000 0 — 2 4 1 Schalmont 010 000 0 — 1 6 0

Tedesco and Semerad; Amorosi and Palumbo.



