



Manhasset Advances Over Great Neck North 81-63

By Dave Graff

Playing in the quarter finals at Manhasset would be a tall task for any team. The Indians had a 20-1 record, are the #1 seed, have 2 starters returning from last year's class A state championship and average almost 80 ppg. Great Neck North, the #8 seed, with championship aspirations of their own, gave a great effort but Manhasset was too talented and rolled into the Nassau Class A semis with an 81-63 win.

GNN started the game in a 2-3 zone with 6'8" senior Luke Cronin anchoring the middle. Manhasset countered with their tough halfcourt man to man. Jackson Sutherland opened the game for GNN with a 3 and James Notias did the same for Manhasset tying the score. Notias and Liam Connor scored on the break for Manhasset and Liam Buckley's 3 pushed Manhasset in front 10-4. Cronin and Doran Sedaghat scored in the post for GNN and cut the lead to 11-8. A barrage of 3's from both teams followed. Connor hit three 3's for Manhasset and Sutherland and Eitan Zargari kept GNN in the game with their own triples. The quarter ended with Manhasset in front 22-14.

GNN went man to man at the start of the second quarter to counter Manhasset's shooting and had initial success. Sutherland scored on a floater, a step back 3 and a drive to cut Manhasset's lead to 28-23, but Jack Diskin scored underneath for the Indians, Connor hit a runner, Notias nailed a 3, and Diskin scored again in the paint to push Manhasset in front 37-23. Diskin was not only scoring, he also played outstanding defense on Cronin. Diskin denied position, overplayed passing lanes, and boxed Cronin off the boards. When Cronin did receive the ball, Diskin contested every shot. Manhasset also doubled Cronin making it difficult for him to get any good looks. Notias hit another long 3 (his 4th) and the half ended with Manhasset leading 42-29.

In the third quarter both teams kept up their hot 3-pt. shooting. Eitan Zargari and Doran Sedaghat each hit two 3's for GNN. Notias, Buckley and Evan Fulgieri all connected on 3's for Manhasset. GNN won the quarter by a pt. at 18-17 and the score was 59-47 Manhasset at the end of the 3rd.

In the 4th quarter Manhasset pulled away on one of their signature runs. Buckley opened the final quarter with a driving and 1 and then scored on an out of bounds play. Jack Lamarco followed with a 3. Diskin scored 6 straight pts hitting 2 jumpers and a runner. Conner scored on an offensive rebound and Manhasset broke the game open, up 74-50. To GNN's credit they played tough until the end. The Blazers hit 4 more 3's the rest of the way, one each by Menash Harooni and Doran Sedaghat and two by Dhruv Bagchi (GNN hit 12 threes for the game, Manhasset hit 11). The final score was 81-63 Manhasset.

Liam Connor led Manhasset with 21 pts and 10 assists, James Notias and Liam Buckley each had 18 pts and Jack Diskin had 16 pts. Diskin and Manhasset's team defense held Luke Cronin

to 4 pts (he had scored 19 pts in the Blazers 1st round win over Floral Park). Jackson

Sutherland led GNN with 19 pts.

No team from the island has repeated as state champions in two decades. Manhasset will continue their quest when they face #5 seeded Wantagh in the county semi finals Tuesday, 2/28 at Farmingdale State. Manhasset looks ready for the challenge.