

SPORTS

Herndon-Reston Boys' U11B team Captures Northern Virginia Lacrosse Title

HRYL boys' squads impressive during playoff weekend.

Herndon-Reston Youth Lacrosse this past weekend completed successful season in action in the Northern Virginia Youth Lacrosse League. Four of the boys' teams were in action in the playoffs, highlighted by U11B's championship run. In other playoff action, the Boys U15C team lost to eventual champion Fairfax Police by a score of 5-2. The U15B team lost a heart-breaker in a double-overtime thriller to Southwest, 5-4. The U13B team won their first playoff game against McLean, 5-3, before losing to Vienna, 3-1, in the semifinals. Club information can be found at HRYL.org, with registration for the spring 2010 girls' and boys' lacrosse seasons opening up in December.

Quarterfinal Playoff Game: Saturday, June 6

Following the same script that had propelled the team to seven consecutive victories, the second seeded Herndon-Reston Youth Lacrosse U-11B boys' team relied on a stubborn defense and balanced offense to prevail 8-3 over Loudoun West U11B2 in a quarterfinals round contest of the NVYLL playoffs on June 6. Defensemen Louie Boyum and David Kroll anchored Herndon-Reston's dogged resistance by combining to generate 10 of the team's 16 defensive takeaways, and goalies Nathan Gadiano and Evan McDivitt made four combined stops to further stymie Loudoun West's attack.

Offensively, not only did seven different players score for HRYL, but in a selfless display of team passing, all eight of HRYL's goals directly resulted off of assists. Herndon-Reston jumped out to an early 1-0 lead when Michael Patrick found Matt Hillebrand alone near the crease, and soon thereafter, Joe Wilson fed Christian Epperson to stretch the advantage to 2-0. HRYL increased the lead to 3-0 early in the second stanza after Epperson assisted on a goal by Hugh Curran. After Loudoun West narrowed the margin to 3-1, Michael Patrick scored off an Epperson assist just before halftime to carry HRYL to a 4-1 lead into the break. HRYL increased its margin to 6-2 during the third quarter on a Ty Baylor goal, assisted by Patrick, and a Matt Hughes goal off another Epperson feed. HRYL eventually widened its lead to 8-2 on fourth

quarter goals by Nate Campbell, off Patrick's third assist, and by Matt Hillebrand's second goal, off a feed from Nathan Gadiano, to conclude HRYL's scoring.

Semifinal Playoff Game: Sunday, June 7

After recording its eighth straight victory in the quarterfinals round of the playoffs to run its overall record to 9-1, the Herndon-Reston Youth Lacrosse U-11B boys' team got the opportunity for a rematch in the U-11B NVYLL semifinals against the Great Falls U11B3 squad that had blemished their otherwise perfect record. This time, the tables turned, as Herndon-Reston vanquished Great Falls by an 11-0 margin to earn a trip to the U11B Northwest Blue Division championship game.

Unlike its early season contest in which Great Falls jumped to a first quarter lead it never relinquished, this time Herndon-Reston returned the favor. Michael Patrick and Christian Epperson each scored within the first two minutes, and Epperson's second goal off a Ty Baylor pass pushed the lead to 3-0 by the end of the first quarter. In the second stanza, HRYL's solid defense and goals by Nathan Gadiano, Patrick, and two more by Epperson pushed the lead to 7-0. Nate Campbell added two tallies in the third period, and fourth quarter scores by Baylor and John Cardellicchio capped the blitz.

In addition to its offensive firepower,

Herndon-Reston recorded its third shut-out of the season on the strength of goalies David Kroll and Joe Wilson, who made four combined saves and twice gained possession on shots wide of the cage when Wilson sprinted from the crease to be nearest the ball when it went out of bounds. Ty Baylor, Louie Boyum and Matt Hughes each had three defensive takeaways, while Peter Shull and Nathan Gadiano added two a piece. HRYL also controlled the ball for much of the game on the strength of five ground balls each from J.C. Sipher and Nate Campbell, while Ty Baylor, Michael Patrick, Matt Hughes and Hugh Curran each contributed four.

Championship Game: Sunday, June 7

In a matchup befitting a championship game, top-seeded and unbeaten Algonkian (10-0-1) squared off against second-seeded Herndon-Reston (10-1-0) for the championship of the U-11B Northwest Blue Division championship. The gripping play on the field lived up to its billing, as Herndon-Reston stormed back from a two-goal fourth quarter deficit before Christian Epperson's fourth goal of the game with just under a minute left in sudden-death overtime allowed Herndon-Reston to capture the title with a thrilling 6-5 victory.

Neither team seized an advantage in the first quarter, and just when it looked like the period would end scoreless, Nate

Campbell's feed to Matt Hillebrand gave Herndon-Reston a 1-0 lead. However, the lead was short-lived, as Algonkian answered just before the quarter end to tie it.

Catalyzed by its score, Algonkian scored twice in the opening minutes of the second period to grab a 3-1 lead. Christian Epperson's unassisted tally narrowed Algonkian's advantage to 3-2, but Algonkian scored again in the last minute of the first half to carry a 4-2 lead into the break.

Herndon-Reston fought back to strike first in the third quarter on another Epperson goal off a Ty Baylor assist to narrow the deficit to one, but Algonkian responded with another tally to carry a 5-3 lead and the momentum heading into the final quarter.

Nate Campbell's unassisted goal three minutes into the fourth period closed the gap to 5-4 and simultaneously breathed new life into the Herndon-Reston squad. After four close shots missed their target or were deflected away, Michael Patrick found Christian Epperson with two minutes left in the fourth to even the game at 5-5. Both teams tried to score before the end of regulation, but the respective defenses were up to the challenge,

forcing the championship into sudden-death overtime.

Algonkian controlled the overtime face-off and maintained possession in the Herndon-Reston defensive zone for most of the first 2 1/2 minutes of the extra session, and if not for the hustle of defensemen David Kroll, Matt Hughes and Nathan Gadiano, as well as two clutch saves by goalie Joe Wilson, Algonkian might well have won it. Fortunately for Herndon-Reston, Hugh Curran corralled a ground ball just before Algonkian was whistled for a penalty at the 1:33 mark of overtime that granted Herndon-Reston a free clear at midfield and an extra man opportunity for one minute. Herndon-Reston moved the ball around to probe the defense, and when Christian Epperson found an opening for his fourth goal with just under a minute remaining, it prompted a celebratory team pile-up at midfield littered with randomly scattered sticks, helmets, and gloves that were tossed into the air just after the moment of triumph.

In addition to Epperson's heroics, Herndon-Reston's victory was keyed by goalies Nathan Gadiano and Joe Wilson, who turned away six Algonkian shots; by Ty Baylor, who created four defensive takeaways to go with his eight ground balls; and by Michael Patrick, who tallied 10 ground balls, including two on face-offs.

In winning the championship, Herndon-Reston finished its season with an 11-1 record and a 10 game winning streak.



The Herndon-Reston Youth Lacrosse U11 boys' team was victorious in its title game against Algonkian last weekend. Pictured are, back row, from left: Coach Mike Curran, Evan McDivitt, Christian Epperson, Michael Patrick, Peter Shull, Matt Hillebrand, David Kroll, Marshall Gordon, Hugh Curran, Ty Baylor, Matt Hughes, Louie Boyum and Coach Rob Hillebrand. Front row, from left, are: Coach Doug Kroll, John Johnson, J.C. Sipher, Nathan Gadiano, Joe Wilson, John Cardellicchio, H.T. Elston, Nate Campbell and Coach Todd Baylor.

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