

Georgetown Prep's rally falls short in triple-overtime loss to St. Paul's (Balt.)

By Christian Swezey
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As he arrived at Georgetown Prep's campus Tuesday, St. Paul's (Balt.) boys' lacrosse Coach Rick Brocato was asked by an alum whether his team would win. Brocato was in no mood for chest-thumping.

"All I know is that it's going to be a close game," he said.

In a series marked by one-goal games, Tuesday's proved even more dramatic than usual. The Little Hoyas came back from a five-goal deficit only to fall in triple overtime, 9-8.

It was the fourth one-goal game in six years in the series. The Crusaders (2-1) and Little Hoyas (6-1) are two of the top teams in the nation; the game featured nearly two dozen players who have committed to play in college, including several who will suit up for top Division I programs Syracuse, Virginia, Johns Hopkins, Maryland, North Carolina and Georgetown.

And as if it were needed, there was some added spice to the contest.

The Interstate Athletic Conference was 5-0 in games this season against the Maryland Interscholastic Athletic

Association, long considered one of the top lacrosse conferences in the nation.

"We knew about being 0-5 against the IAC," Brocato said. "We told the guys that we were playing for league pride, and I'm glad we got that monkey off our backs."

Said Georgetown Prep Coach Kevin Giblin of his team: "The kids played hard, they left it on the field. We got down 6-1 and came back to lead 8-7. I'm proud of the way our team played."

The Little Hoyas had six shots in overtime, including two on an extra-man possession early in the third overtime. The second shot was saved by senior goalkeeper Gunnar Waldt. The penalty was released an instant after Waldt made the save.

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And Waldt's precise clearing pass to a teammate at midfield gave the Crusaders a 5-on-4 fast break. Senior Pat Powderly gained possession outside the offensive box and passed quickly to classmate Andrew Barton, who scored the winning goal on a running 10-yard shot with 2 minutes 19 seconds left in the third overtime.

The Little Hoyas had trailed 6-1 early in the third quarter. It was a one-goal game less than two minutes later, following goals from seniors Bobby Gribbin, Chris Huffstetler, Matt Collins and Matt Smith.

The Little Hoyas took their last lead at 8-7 on a goal by Gribbin with 4:31 to play. The Crusaders tied it at 8 on a goal by senior Jay Carlson with 3:40 left.

The goalies took over from there. Georgetown Prep junior Ford Martin made two saves of point-blank shots in overtime; Waldt finished with three overtime saves.

Powderly (Syracuse), Spencer Parks (North Carolina) and Jay Carlson (Maryland) each finished with two goals for the Crusaders.

Collins (Notre Dame) and Gribbin (Penn State) each scored two goals for the Little Hoyas and senior longstick middle Taylor Morgan (Syracuse) added four takeaways. Senior midfielder Fern Murias (Michigan)

helped force overtime; he was matched one-on-one against St. Paul's senior Jeff Fountain (Georgetown) in the final minute of regulation. The Crusaders ran two isolation plays for Fountain but Murias held him without a shot.

The Little Hoyas were left to regret three non-releasable penalties for six minutes: One on an illegal stick for three minutes, and one-minute penalties after a player illegally touched the ball with his hand on a face-off and an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on Giblin.

The Crusaders scored three times on extra-man offense.

"I didn't coach a particularly good game," Giblin said. "I have to take this loss on myself. They called a penalty on me and that gave them a goal. And it's a one-goal game. Sometimes coaching can lose a game."

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Note: The IAC is now 6-1 against the MIAA after Tuesday's games, which included Landon's one-goal win over Spalding. There is one MIAA vs IAC game left: Landon at Gilman on April 3.

The MIAA won the season series last year, 8-4.

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