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Some kisses better than others

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Georgetown Prep dominates Landon, 11-3, earns tie for IAC lacrosse title

Several minutes after the Interstate Athletic Conference lacrosse tournament final, Georgetown Prep coach Kevin Giblin shook the hand of Landon coach Rob Bordley at midfield.

“Well, we kissed our sister again,” said Giblin, referring to their tie for the IAC title.

Giblin and Bordley have been bitter combatants at rival schools for 23 years. Their tie for the crown this year was appropriate. But there was no question who felt better Wednesday afternoon after Prep’s resounding 11-3 victory.

Series notes

» It wasn’t Prep’s most decisive win of the series. The Little Hoyas won 15-3 in the 2006 IAC tournament final.

» Landon leads the series 22-9.

» Prep has won seven of the last eight meetings and nine of the last 13.

Playing with passion and aggression from the opening faceoff, the Little Hoyas dominated on the Bears’ home turf, avenging a painful regular season loss on the same field.

“You win the tournament, we feel like we’re the champs,” said Giblin. “But, you know, we split it with Landon. That’s happened several times.”

But this was hardly routine stuff for Giblin, whose team showed its readiness by scoring on its first possession of each quarter. It was a stark reversal from Landon’s 6-5 victory two weeks ago, when the Bears jumped to a 4-0 halftime lead.

“Last time we thought we came out with no intensity in the first half,”



Action was fast and furious in the IAC tournament final as Landon’s Will Leighton (5) trips up Georgetown Prep’s Billy Gribbin in front of Landon goalie Will Joyce. (Photo courtesy of Roy Bombard)

said junior midfielder Maddy Collins. “The big thing we stressed this game was coming out early, getting ahead, and then we could be patient and do what we wanted.”

Collins (two goals, two assists) led a balanced offense that included contributions from junior attack Mike Pirone (two goals, one assist), senior midfielder Pat Cotter (two goals, one assist) and a goal each from five other players.

“Definitely a good feeling. I feel like we really got back at them,” said Cotter. “Last time it was raining. We didn’t come out prepared at all. This time we were fired up.”

By winning the tournament, Prep (20-3) earned a tie for the league title with regular-season champion Landon (18-4).

“Two premiere programs in the country,” said Giblin. “Anytime we get together, they’re normally one-goal games. But I’ll take the win.”

Prep also got a big game in the cage from senior John Kemp (10 saves) with support from junior defenders Alex Blonsky and Robert Posniewski, senior defender Greg Tabb, and scrappy junior defensive midfielder Fernando Murias.

“We did a better job on ground balls and John Kemp is spectacular. They had some point-blank shots and he was right on them,” said Giblin. “He’s been like that all year for us. We had a whole new defense coming in and he’s done a great job solidifying our defense.”

Prep got strong work at the faceoff X from senior Nick Serena, who won 11 of 18, including three to start periods, giving the Little Hoyas possessions they didn’t waste.

Prep senior Billy Gribbin took advantage first, scoring 23 seconds into the game. Two minutes later, Pirone scored a man-up goal to make it 2-0.

When Serena won the second period faceoff, keying a fast-break goal by senior attack Corey Dobyns, Prep had a 4-0 lead, which swelled to 6-0 with back-to-back goals from the same spot on the right wing from Collins, who beat Landon goalie William Joyce (9 saves).

“I put them both in the same spot, where coach had been telling us to put them all week – right off his left shoulder,” said Collins. “We made a statement today, showing we’re the best team in the area.”

If Landon had any hopes of a comeback, they were nixed at the start of the second half. After Serena won the third period faceoff, Collins fed Cotter for a goal, 23 seconds in to make it 7-1. When it happened again at the beginning of the fourth period, Prep milked the clock and Collins fed Pirone with 9:59 left, making it 9-2.

“Their goalie played better. Their faceoff guy played better. Their shooters played better,” said Bordley. “They played better defense. What we tried to do, didn’t fool anybody.”

After the sting of Wednesday afternoon subsides, Landon can find balm in winning a share of the IAC crown.

“We stressed to the kids, we’re 18-4. We’re co-champs,” said Bordley. “We won it outright last year. We’re proud of our seniors.”

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