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Notre Dame ends Virginia lacrosse season, 12-10

By [Zach Berman](#), Published: May 20

CHESTER, Pa. — The Notre Dame players sprinted from their bench toward the opposite goal, past the Virginia players left watching in disbelief. One of those disappointed players was [Steele Stanwick](#), the Cavaliers star who won the Tewaaron Trophy as college lacrosse's most outstanding player a year ago.

But at that instant Sunday, Stanwick had to accept that his college career was over after the fifth-seeded Cavaliers suffered a 12-10 loss to fourth-seeded Notre Dame in the NCAA quarterfinals.

“Wouldn't have changed anything about my career here,” said Stanwick, the leading scorer in Virginia history.

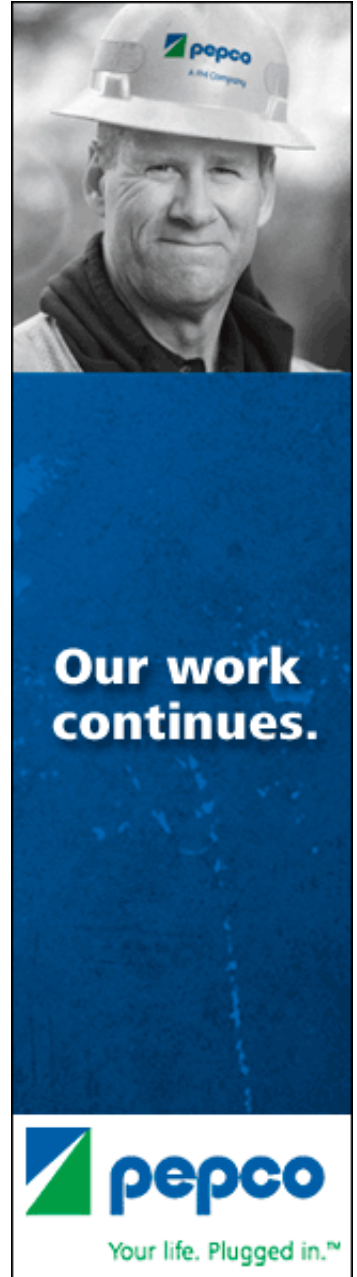
He probably would have preferred a different ending. Virginia's premature exit marked the first time in Stanwick's four years that the team did not reach college lacrosse's final weekend. For a Cavaliers team that spent the majority of the season ranked No. 1 before losing three of its final five games, Sunday's defeat left both Stanwick and [Coach Dom Starsia](#) lamenting a run that never came.

“It kind of epitomized our season in a lot of different ways,” Starsia said. “We were just a little bit off.”

The game was tied, 8-8, with less than eight minutes left in the fourth quarter, when Notre Dame's Ryan Foley hurled a shot past Virginia goalie Rob Fortunato to give the Irish (13-2) a 9-8 lead. During Foley's follow-through, Virginia's Scott McWilliams decked Foley with what appeared to be a helmet-to-helmet hit. Foley stayed on the ground for about five minutes before he was removed on a stretcher.

Foley never came back to the game. Virginia (12-4) never came back in the game. The Irish scored three consecutive goals after Foley's injury to build a 12-8 lead.

“We were pretty hotheaded,” Notre Dame midfielder Steve Murphy said. “But then we kind of focused our energy. We said, ‘Let's beat them on the scoreboard and send them home.’ That would be a bigger slap in the face than actually going to retaliate back at them on the field.”



Irish goalie John Kemp, a Georgetown Prep alum whom Notre Dame Coach Kevin Corrigan considers the best in the country, had 14 saves. After Virginia averaged 14.5 goals through 11 games, it was held to 10 goals or fewer in five consecutive games.

“We always thought we were a team grinding it out, waiting for the big game,” said Stanwick, who had two goals and five assists to finish his career with 269 points.

Virginia won the national championship in 2011, the fifth title in the program’s history and fourth under Starsia. They have never been able to repeat. Although Starsia is optimistic about his returning players, his next team will not have Stanwick.

“I’ve tried not to think too long and hard about whether he’s the best lacrosse player I’ve ever been around, but he might be,” Starsia said. “He’s probably the smartest and best skilled lacrosse player I’ve ever been around.”

●**DUKE 17, COLGATE 6:** Robert Rotanz scored five goals, leading the Blue Devils (15-4) to a win against the Raiders (14-4) in the second game of the quarterfinal doubleheader in suburban Philadelphia. Duke, seeded No. 3, advances to play ACC rival Maryland on Saturday in Foxborough, Mass.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.