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Saturday, Nov. 15, 2008

Gladiators defend title in penalty kicks

Glenelg edges Sparrows Point for second straight year

By Rob Dauster | Special to The Gazette

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A hundred minutes was not enough to decide the Class 1A State girls soccer championship.

It wasn't even enough time for Glenelg High or Baltimore County's Sparrows Point to score a goal. On a cold, foggy night at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, the Gladiators edged the Pointers 1-0, taking their third consecutive state crown after a 4-3 score in penalty kicks. Glenelg (10-7-1) won the 2A title in 2006 and defeated Sparrows Point 2-0 in the 2007 1A final.

In the decisive penalty kick session, the Pointers shot first, and, as if on cue, Carey came up with another huge save. After Glenelg made its first two shots, and Sparrows Point added a goal, Gladiators' goalkeeper Catherine Carey rose to the occasion, diving to her left to make her second penalty kick save.

"I watched their eyes and watched where their plant foot will be, and [the rest] is mostly reaction," Carey said.

The Pointers made their last two kicks. Combined with a LaHayne miss, Cotrell was left to carry the pressure of giving her team another title. She calmly sent a laser to the bottom right corner of the net.

"I always go that way, because I know it will go in," Cotrell said of the game winner.

"I wasn't worried at all."

Glenelg's defense was tough the entire night, routinely coming up with big plays to keep the Pointers off of the scoreboard.

That wasn't the case earlier in the year, however.

By their 10th game, the Gladiators' defense had given up 24 goals. That's when head coach Dean Sheridan decided to make a change.

"We made some adjustments," Sheridan said after the game. "We moved Meaghan Gayuder to sweeper. We moved Hope LaHayne back into the back with [Elizabeth Ebeling]. We kept [Ellen Axenfield] at stopper, and we've given up one goal since."



Bill Ryan/The Gazette
Glenelg's girls soccer team celebrates a third straight state title on Friday night at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County.



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While the defense enjoyed plenty of success on Friday, LaHayne and freshman keeper Brooke Carey made the biggest plays.

With eight minutes left in the first half, Pointers' forward Sarah Hoar booted a shot from the edge of the box. The shot deflected off the hands of Carey on its way to the goal. However, LaHayne hustled to clear the ball just before it reached the goal line.

"I saw [Hoar] coming in and I saw Brooke in the front corner," said LaHayne. "So I just went to the post in the far corner, stood there, and hoped that it didn't come to me."

In the first overtime, LaHayne and Carey combined to make another dazzling defensive play. With four minutes left in the period, Hoar's corner kick found the right foot of the Pointers' Karaleigh Leonard. Leonard ripped a shot from approximately 15 yards that headed goalward before LaHayne threw her body in front of the shot to stop it.

The Pointers would maintain possession, and almost immediately after the LaHayne save, Hoar would find Macy Boemmel unmarked for another shot, but Carey made yet another save.

Both teams threatened during the second overtime, but the combination of great defensive play on both sides, a slick field, and utter exhaustion from 100 minutes of soccer brought the contest to penalty kicks.

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