

Press Clippings 10/26/2018

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Streamwood 1, Dundee-Crown 0

PK conversion the difference

Chavez solves Smiech as Sabres slip past Chargers at sectional

By Patrick Z. McGavin



- Elgin's Omar Lopez controls the ball against Crystal Lake Central's Luke Montford during Wednesday's Class 3A Hampshire Sectional. (H. Rick Bamman/Courier-News)

The one-on-one battle between Streamwood forward Alex Chavez and Dundee-Crown goalkeeper Damian Smiech produced a dynamic backdrop to Wednesday's thrilling game.

Smiech, who finished with eight saves, denied Chavez four times.

"I knew (Smiech) was tall, and a couple of times during the game I hit it up toward the goal and he blocked me," Chavez said. "I knew I had to try and push the ball past him." Chavez found a way, converting a penalty kick in the 76th minute as Streamwood prevailed 1-0 over Dundee-Crown in a Class 3A Hampshire Sectional semifinal.

Second-seeded Streamwood (17-4-3) will play top-seeded Elgin at 5 p.m. Friday for the sectional title. The teams played to a 2-2 tie on Sept. 19 in Upstate Eight action. Chavez scored his team-best 18th goal after the official ruled a Dundee-Crown defender illegally touched the ball inside the box.

"Every day after practice we have been taking penalty kicks just in case, and it came up (Wednesday)," Chavez said. "You have to take advantage of every single shot you can get."

Dundee-Crown (18-4-4) matched the Sabres every step of the way. Senior midfielder Arnol Batres said it was a bitter loss to stomach.

“I felt like we played great, but that penalty (kick) at the end really killed us,” Batres said. “Nothing is worse than losing on a penalty in the last five minutes. “We had some good chances, but you have to put away every opportunity you have.”

Elgin 2, Crystal Lake Central 0: The combination of Omar Lopez and Rafael Perez continued to sizzle against the Tigers.

Lopez scored two first-half goals off assists from Perez as the Maroons (17-1-3) won a sectional semifinal for the first time in program history.

Lopez pushed his program-record scoring mark to 41 goals.

“Getting early goals like we did (Wednesday) really calms us down,” Lopez said. “It helps us move the game. The defense also does not have the pressure. If they make a mistake we can still recover from it by having two goals.”

Elgin has not allowed a goal in three playoff games.

“My defense has been here all four years,” captain Alex Kunicki said. “We know the game pretty well. When it comes down to it, we tell the offensive guys we just need goals and they are not going to put a goal in on us.”

Patrick Z. McGavin is a freelance reporter for The Courier-News.

---Daily Herald---10/26/2018

Girls volleyball: St. Charles East ousts South Elgin

By Dave Hess



- The St. Charles East Saints varsity girls volleyball team celebrates after their regional title win over South Elgin at South Elgin High School Thursday night. *Patrick Kunzer | Staff Photographer*

St. Charles East coach Jennie Kull realized defeating a talented South Elgin team on its home court would not be an easy task.

The Saints got the job done.

Second-seeded, the Saints rolled to a 25-19, 25-20 win over the fourth-ranked Storm to win the title at the 4A South Elgin regional Thursday night.

The Saints (22-14) advance to the Huntley sectional to play Belvidere North Monday at 5:30 p.m. Belvidere North defeated Harlem 25-13, 25-11 to win its own regional crown.

"South Elgin is a very talented team," said Kull. "We knew beating them in their house wouldn't be easy. We executed the game plan and came out aggressively in the first game. In the second game, South Elgin had their run but we weathered the storm."

In Game 1, with 6 lead changes early, the Saints seized control late. With the score tied at 15, East ripped off 5 straight points to grab a 20-15 advantage.

Sam Urban collected 3 kills and Anita Prybell 2 during the pivotal run for the Saints.

On a kill by Clemson-bound setter McKenna Slavik, the Saints took its biggest lead of the game at 24-17.

A kill by Urban lifted the St Charles East to a 1-0 lead in the match.

In Game 2, South Elgin (27-10) came out determined to extend the match to a third game.

The Storm took an 11-8 lead on a kill by Angelina Negron.

The Saints regrouped and went on a 10-2 surge keyed by 3 kills each by Urban and Kristen Rogers to take an 18-13 lead.

The regional plaque seemed destined to land in St. Charles.

But, the Storm had other ideas.

With 2 kills each from Kendall Richardson, Hayley Fisher and Negron, the Storm rallied for a 7-0 run and led 20-18.

In a game of runs, the Saints ended the game and match on a 7-0 run capped by a kill from Rachel Sheehan.

The Storm, which ended with a school-record 27 wins, received 6 kills each from Negron and Fisher.

Defensively, Richardson collected 7 digs and Emily Wellman 6.

"We have no regrets tonight or for the season," said South Elgin coach Joni Plach. "The kids played great tonight and had a great season. St Charles East is a good team and they were a better team tonight."

Slavik paced the Saints with 5 kills and 28 assists.

"This regional championship feels great," said Slavik. "We learned from all our losses and we were ready for the regionals. I have great hitters and they hit everything I set."

Urban backed up Slavik with 13 kills while Rogers collected 5 kills and Sheehan had 4 kills." This is a great group of kids and we have a great coaching staff," said Kull. "We play great competition and play in great tournaments to get ready for the postseason. We don't worry about the losses. We try to learn from them."