

## **Boys Class C State Semifinal Shoreham-WR defense comes through Rye falls 4-2, setting up state final against Corning East**

June 8, 2007

During warm-ups Matt Vernam told his Shoreham-Wading River teammates, "We are giving up nothing right here."

Shoreham-Wading River didn't score much either, but it was enough because the captain's words rung true.

The Wildcats beat Rye 4-2 in a state Class C semifinal Thursday at Hofstra. SWR plays Corning East for the state title at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Cicero North-Syracuse High School.

"I probably said it every minute," Vernam said. "If it needed to be said, I tried to talk it up."

Vernam set the defensive tone early. The defenseman caught Rye's Alex Prozano in transition just outside the crease and used a full extension dive to knock the ball from his stick and keep Rye (16-8) from taking an early 1-0 lead. The Garnets would eventually do so at 6:01 in the first on a Fran Archibald goal from 8 yards on the left side.

Rye would not score again until Archibald put one in to make it 4-2 with 59 seconds left in the game. SWR defensemen pressured the Rye attack into turnovers and made runs at the net difficult.

"The defense played great for the third game in a row," SWR's Joe Lustgarden said. "(Goalie) Lee Malandrino came up huge once again and Vernam, Willie Mahoney and Ryan Mahoney came up huge."

So did Lustgarden. The sophomore had two assists and a goal off a pass from Brett Drost that gave SWR (17-3) a 3-1 lead with 3:08 left in the third. After Rye took a 1-0 lead, SWR answered with goals from Drost and Austin on Lustgarden assists to take a 2-1 advantage with 3:01 left in the first. Nick Madden scored to make it 4-1 in the fourth.

SWR couldn't produce much offense otherwise. It saw quality shots turned aside by Rye goalie Colin Hart (10 saves), and many shots bounce wide of the net.

"It's cement," Lustgarden said of Hofstra's Shuart Stadium field. "We have never played on this surface, so we always shoot outside the cage so it would (bounce) high. On this field you shoot outside the cage, it's going to the field-goal post."

Both teams were sluggish in the first half, especially in a scoreless second quarter. SWR managed two shots to Rye's six.

"We never got a chance to click," SWR coach Tom Rotanz said. "Let's save it for (Saturday)."

The win also means that both the SWR boys and girls lacrosse teams will play for state titles this weekend.

"When we were in school today, we saw the girls leave," Vernam said. "Everyone was pumped about that. It's great that both of us are going to play for a state title."

### **CLASS C STATE TOURNAMENT**

Semifinal - At Hofstra

Rye -- 1 - 0 - 0 - 1 -- 2

SWR -- 2 - 0 - 1 - 1 -- 4

Goals - R: Archibald 2; SWR: Lustgarden, Drost, Austin, Madden. Saves - R: Hart 10; SWR: Malandrino 6.