

# Shoreham lax defense helps down Comsewogue



Shoreham-Wading River middle Nick Gufrida (22) opens the scoring off a feed by defenseman Jon Blackmore (24) in the first half of a game against Comsewogue. (Newsday/Joseph D. Sullivan / May 9, 2008)

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Shoreham-Wading River gladly extended an invitation to Comsewogue to make passes in front of the goal crease. The Warriors sent back a positive RSVP, but certainly didn't find a party.

Instead Comsewogue was greeted by a physical Wildcats defense that turned promising passes into turnovers or harmless shots.

"We've been working on swarming the ball," defender Kevin DeFranco said. "We are dropping our guys in and we want to invite the pass. Right when it happens the stick is there and we are hammering down on them."

Shoreham didn't allow more than two goals in any quarter as it beat visiting Comsewogue, 6-4, Thursday in Suffolk Division II lacrosse.

Things were not much easier even when Comsewogue was able to get off good shots. It saw most of them sail wide or be turned away by goalie Nick Longo, who made eight saves, including two crucial ones from point-blank range in the third quarter.

"To hold a team like Comsewogue to four goals, actually three for almost the whole game, is an achievement," SWR coach Tom Rotanz said.

Longo also helped his offense late in the first quarter. He intercepted a pass from behind the net and fired an outlet pass up the sideline to start a fast break that ended with Joey Lustgarten scoring on a quick pass from Nik Mullen to give Shoreham a 3-2 lead.

Shoreham (10-1) extended its advantage to 5-2 early in the third when Matt Marsicano bounced one in on a pass from Mike Delia. Mike Perdie scored his second goal with 4:13 remaining to make it 6-3. Comsewogue (8-3) cut it to 6-4 on John DeChiaro's second goal with 1:12 left.

"You up six goals and you should win the game," Comsewogue coach Pete Mitchell said. "The kids played real tough. Especially a team like Shoreham, a tremendously gifted offensive team, you hold them to six goals you should take care of business."

The win was important for the Wildcats as it gave them a strong chance of claiming the second seed in the Suffolk Class B playoffs and the first-round bye that comes with it.

"Coach was stressing before the game that if we win this we will be the No. 2 seed and that's really big for us," Perdie said. "It gets us a little more time to prepare for the playoffs."