

Oct. 20 Field Hockey



Sister schools collided in the Mercer County Tournament as Nottingham (white jerseys) took on Hamilton in an MCT play-in game (Photo by John Blaine/purchase photos by e-mailing jbsportphoto@aol.com).

Despite congestive woes, Buckley buckles down for 'Stars in MCT victory

By Rich Fisher

Fish4Scores.com

Oct. 20: Just one goal was scored in two games between the Hamilton West and Nottingham field hockey teams this season.

But that singular score was enough to provide the Northstars a whole extra game as they took a 1-0 victory over the Hornets in today's Mercer County Tournament play-in contest.

Lyndsey Buckley converted a feed from Dalia Lopez and deflected a shot of a Hornet stick with 15:17 left in the first half, which was all Nottingham needed to advance to Saturday's first-round game against top-seeded and unbeaten Hopewell Valley (13-0).

"We work on that play a lot in practice and games," Buckley said. "It was just on key today."

Lyndsey's goal came on a day where she had a congested chest, clogged throat and froggy voice.

"That was surprising," she said of her score. "But I don't know, it's my senior year, I left it all out on the field. I needed it. I wanted to win this one, it was the MCTs."

It was indeed, and the first MCT game Buckley and her senior teammates have won in their four seasons. While she was happy to win, Lyndsey was ready to celebrate with the covers over her head.

"I just want to go home and go to bed," she said. "Listen to my voice! After I was running around, I was coughing and my chest is very stuffed up."

"I had no idea she was sick until before the game," coach Jen Cicale said. "And of course she wasn't wearing under armor."

If she did, her breathing might have been worse.

"I don't wear that stuff, I feel claustrophobic," she said. "But I did actually feel weak. After I scored, I felt I couldn't run as much."



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Nottingham's Aisha Torres stickhandles ahead of a Hamilton defender during the second half of today's game (Photo by John Blaine/purchase photos by e-mailing jbsportphoto@aol.com).

That one goal stood up, however, as talented sophomore Amanda Muziani made it stand up with eight saves and Hamilton's Alicia Torres kept it close with eight of her own. The teams played to a scoreless tie earlier this season.

"That was disappointing for us because we had like, 30 shots (actually 21) on goal and didn't come out with the win," Buckley said. "And we were angry after the Steinert loss (Tuesday), so we really wanted to come back with a win."

Cicale said she was happy with Buckley's play at midfield, and had praise for several others as well.

"Nicole Mont did a good job," the coach said. "Aisha Torres on the front line did well, and Dee Dee Augustin did a great job getting the ball down the field and getting it out from under their feet. We had the front line moving the ball.

"Even Alexis (Rendina), she's young (a sophomore), she's starting to turn it around, stop the ball, make some offensive moves."

Although Nottingham (3-12-1) had trouble scoring again, Cicale was happy with how her team moved the ball.

"It was good for our confidence heading to Hopewell," she said. "It's nice to have looked a little offensive. We controlled the field and controlled the ball so we know that we can do that.

"Having that in mind, hopefully we go out against Hopewell and we control the ball a little more, (rather) than them having the ball all game."

Nottingham fell 8-0 to the Bulldogs earlier this year. When asked if the Northstars would turn that score around, Cicale laughed.

"I've got some things in mind," she said with a grin. "I've been brainstorming.

"Hopefully we can take the momentum from winning into the Hopewell game and turn it around a little and not lose 8-0. I don't plan on that happening again."

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Despite the loss, which ended Hamilton's season at 0-16-1, the Hornets played much better against their sister school than last time. Nottingham had a 21-8 shot advantage in the first game, but it was just 9-8 in this one.

Coach Judy Goldstein had nothing but praise – well deserved praise, in fact – for a group of seniors that never threw in the towel despite winning just one game over the past two seasons.

That group includes Zaina Banihani, Desiree Hall, Elena Karmazin, Heather Konstan, Olivia Pangaldi, Erika Perez, Gaella Rene, Liz Schmidt, Torres and Kristen Turner.

"There's two things I can tell you about this season," Goldstein said. "Number one, I love my team. They give 100 percent from the beginning to end. You never know if the score is 7-0 or 1-0, they keep playing. You can't buy that package anywhere.

"Number two, they kept themselves together. When you have a team that won one game in two years, it breaks down people's character sometimes. Not with these girls. They came out 100 percent two years in a row."

Harkness stars but Hopewell Valley dominates in win over Steinert

HoVal warmed up for its game with Nottingham by taking a 7-0 victory over visiting Steinert today.

And while the score looked bad, it could have been a lot worse were it not for a whopping 24

saves by Spartan goalie Grace Harkness. HoVal had a 31-1 shot advantage.