

Northeast Conference

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2009 Northeast Conference Field Hockey Championship No. 2 Lock Haven and No. 4 Monmouth Advance to Tomorrow's Title Match

After accounting for the biggest upset in Northeast Conference Tournament play since 2000, fourth-seeded Monmouth will try to make it two in a row tomorrow when it faces second-seeded Lock Haven in the NEC Championship Game. The Hawks, who secured the final remaining Tournament berth on the final day of the regular season, shocked Garden State rival Rider in the first of two NEC semifinal matches on Friday at Mercer County Community College in West Windsor, New Jersey. Rider, which won the league's regular season title thanks to an 8-0 record, had not lost to Monmouth since 2002. Meanwhile, #2 Lock Haven shook off last week's regular season loss to Rider, its first to an NEC opponent in 32 games, to outlast #3 Quinnipiac in the second semifinal. Playing for their fourth consecutive NEC crown and subsequent NCAA Play-in appearance, the Lady Eagles carry an all-time 7-0 NEC Tournament record into Saturday's final.

Semifinal One #4 Monmouth 2, #1 Rider 1

West Windsor, NJ -- Only her third shot of the season, this one was an absolute charm. Monmouth's **Nora Bosmans (Oakhurst, NJ/Ocean)** scored exactly 11 minutes into the first overtime to push the Hawks past top-seeded Rider, 2-1, in the first of two semifinal games at the 2009 Northeast Conference Field Hockey Championship.

With the game tied at one apiece and a scramble in front of the Rider goal mouth, Bosmans found the ball and flipped a high shot over sprawling goalkeeper **Lyndsie Johnson (Gibbsboro, NJ/Eastern)**.

"I think the ball went off the goalie's pads [before it came to me]," said Bosmans describing the commotion in front of the net. "I knew she was down on the ground so I decided to take a chance and shoot it high."

The defender's decision was a good one as it gave the Hawks their first-ever postseason victory. As a result, Monmouth earns a ticket to Saturday's NEC Championship Game, the winner of which will represent the conference in next week's NCAA Tournament Play-In.

"I don't even think I can describe the feeling right now," said an elated Bosmans. "Our team has worked so hard to overcome a lot of road blocks and we came into the game knowing we had nothing to lose."

The win over the Garden State rival Broncs marked only the second time in NEC Championship history that the tournament's No. 4 seed managed to pull off an opening round upset. Ironically, the same two parties were involved the first time around when Rider eliminated then-No. 1 Monmouth in the 2000 semifinal.

2009 NEC Field Hockey Championship November 6 & 7 West Windsor, New Jersey

Semifinal Round

Friday, November 6

#4 Monmouth 2, #1 Rider 1

#2 Lock Haven 2, #3 Quinnipiac 1

Championship Round

Saturday, November 7

#2 Lock Haven vs. #4 Monmouth, 12:00 pm

(2009 NEC Field Hockey Semifinal; 1-of-2)

Bryant University (2012-13) • Central Connecticut State University • Fairleigh Dickinson University
Long Island University • Monmouth University • Mount St. Mary's University
Quinnipiac University • Robert Morris University • Sacred Heart University
St. Francis (NY) College • Saint Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

Rider struck first, taking a 1-0 lead on a goal from senior **Erin McGinniss (Newton, NJ/Kittatinny Regional)** in the final minute of the opening half.

The Broncos took advantage of a penalty corner opportunity when sophomore **Virginia Egusquiza (Getxo, Spain)**, the 2009 NEC Player of the Year, controlled the ball and sent it to freshman **Marlaine Schneider (Feasterville, PA/Neshaminy)** on her left. Schneider, the reigning NEC Rookie of the Year, fired a shot on goal that changed direction off McGinniss' stick and rolled past the keeper and into the lower right corner of the cage.

Up until that point, Monmouth goalie **Melissa Katz (Tinton Falls, NJ/Monmouth Regional)**, who finished with 11 saves, had kicked back everything that was coming her way.

The Hawks tied the game 2:19 into the second half on a play involving a pair of all-conference honorees. Taking a short corner pass from freshman **Michelle Pieczynski (Doylestown, PA/Central Bucks West)**, senior **Enza Mazza (Oceanport, NJ/Shore)** fired a one-time shot past Johnson.

Despite a combined total of 17 second-half shots, the contest remained scoreless until the extra session.

Albeit a different final result this time, the game was Rider's second straight overtime affair. The Broncos clinched the No. 1 seed by defeating Lock Haven, 1-0, in double overtime of last weekend's regular season finale.

Semifinal Two

#2 Lock Haven 2, #3 Quinnipiac 1

Lock Haven, PA -- Three-time defending champion Lock Haven hung on to defeat Quinnipiac, 2-1, in the second of two semifinal games at the 2009 Northeast Conference Championship. Set for their fourth consecutive appearance in the NEC title game, the second-seeded Lady Eagles will face No. 4 Monmouth on Saturday at 12:00 pm.

Trailing 2-0, and playing down one player due to a penalty, Quinnipiac jumped back into the game when freshman forward **Kristin Engelke (Medford, NJ/Shawnee)** scored her second goal of the season with 11:11 remaining in regulation.

Lock Haven head coach Pat Rudy immediately called a timeout and her Lady Eagles responded with a flurry of offensive activity over the ensuing four minutes.

Senior **Suzann Hobart (Lewisberry, PA/Redland)** started the push for an insurance goal 18 seconds after play resumed, but her hard shot was block by Rider's defense. Junior **Amy Hordendorf (Topton, PA/Brandywine Heights)**, sophomore **Kristi Shepps (Willow Street, PA/Penn Manor)**, and senior **Alanna Lewis (Trinidad & Tobago)** each took a swing, but NEC Goalkeeper of the Year **Jenna Grossman (Flanders, NJ/Mt. Olive)** was up to the task.

Grossman, who totaled seven saves, made three consecutive stops to keep her team within striking distance, but time eventually ran out on the Bobcats.

Quinnipiac drew six penalty corners in first half, but could not score as Lock Haven jumped out to an early 2-0 lead.

The Lady Eagles opened the scoring in the 11th minute on a penalty stroke that was awarded to Hordendorf. The NEC Offensive Player of the Year took full advantage of the opportunity and hammered home her league-leading 23rd goal of the season.

Hobart, a three-time all-NEC first team honoree, doubled Lock Haven's lead 10:39 later when she drove in on goal and beat Grossman for her 11th tally of the year.

The win was Lock Haven's seventh straight in NEC Tournament play. Since joining the league for the start of the 2004 season, The Haven owns a 50-3 overall record against NEC opponents.