

Sports

C-C rallies to defeat Masco

By Stephen Tobey

Sun Nov 11, 2007, 01:28 AM EST

LOWELL - Masconomet Regional High School boys soccer coach Len Emmons did not see Saturday's MIAA Division 2 North semifinal against Concord-Carlisle as a defensive struggle.

"I felt it was our offense against their offense," he said.

He was right. While Masconomet's offense got the best of it in the first half, C-C took control in the second to prevail, 4-3.

The top-seeded Patriots (19-0-2) will play Dracut for the sectional title on Monday at Cawley Stadium in Lowell (12:30 p.m.). It will be C-C's third straight trip to the Division 1 North final and its fourth appearance in five years. The Patriots are also the defending Division 2 state champions.

The Chieftains (16-2-4), who entered the tournament as the fourth seed, claimed an early 3-0 lead in the first 24 minutes of the game. Alli Olia scored the first goal on a counterattack, gaining possession at the 35 and going in on a breakaway. John Miller set up the goal.

Seven minutes later, in a scramble in front of the C-C goal, Olia took a shot that hit the crossbar and landed just inside the goal line, to increase the Chieftains' lead to 2-0.

With 16:04 left in the half, Andrew Mello took a free kick from 25 yards out that bounced off a C-C defender into the net, increasing Masconomet's lead to 3-0.

The Patriots called a timeout after the third goal, then began to work their way back into the game. With 2:27 left in the half, during a scramble in front of the Masconomet net, Robert Schmidt-Chang scored, with Rob Kolowich assisting, cutting Masconomet's lead to 3-1.

"The odd part is, when we were down 3-0 the kids were calm," said C-C coach Ray Pavlik. "They were confident and said 'Let's get back into this.'"

Midway through the second half, C-C senior Michael Burke, the Dual County League's scoring leader, cut Masconomet's lead to 3-2 when he volleyed a header from Theo Terris into the Masconomet goal.

Burke, who missed the last 2 ½ weeks with a concussion, tied the game with 7:56 remaining with a shot into the middle of the goal from 5 yards in front of it. With 1:52 remaining, Burke scored the game-winner, slipping the ball into the right side of the net.

"I said if we could have gotten one more goal, we would have been all right," Emmons said. "We didn't get that fourth goal. [Burke] has a great shot. His teammates set him up and he was a great finisher."

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