

Titans top Knights

St. John's gets by nemesis to advance to final

By MARK MONROE
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Nervous energy abounded at a packed Tam O' Shanter last night before the St. John's faithful finally erupted when sophomore Ray Morris knocked off St. Francis in overtime.

Morris scored on a snap shot with 1:42 left in the extra period to lift the Titans to a 2-1 victory before a standing-room-only crowd of about 1,300. St. John's junior goaltender Tyler Marzec finished with 26 saves in a fierce district semifinal.

"This is by far the biggest moment of my sports career," Morris said. "There's not a better way than beating your rival like that."

Morris skated in from the blue line and his shot from the slot went between a defender's legs and got by Knight goalie Charlee McAninch.

"I can't believe it went in," Morris said. "The fans were going insane."

The dramatic victory also provided some revenge for St. John's which had been ousted from the playoffs by their rivals the last two seasons.

"They're not only our rivals, but they've been our nemesis and have ended our season the last two years," St. John's coach Mike Hayes said. "It's nice to send them home for once."

Cam Hauenstein tied the score

District hockey	
St. John's	2
St. Francis.....	1
Findlay.....	1
Northview.....	0

in the second period for St. John's, which finished with a 35-26 advantage in shots on goal.

"The place was just going crazy," Hauenstein said. "I was able to tie it. It doesn't get any better than this."

St. John's (26-7-3) advances to the district final next Saturday.

St. Francis freshman Scott Loy gave the Knights the initial lead with a breakaway goal early in the second period. McAninch, a senior, made 33 stops.

"With such fierce competition, what else would you expect but for it to come down to overtime," St. Francis coach Rob Kuhr said. "This whole thing is surreal. You don't prepare for it to come to an end just like that. When it hits you, it's mind boggling."

Loy broke through for the Knights 5:33 into the second period. Senior defenseman Brian Bilius made a long pass from deep in his own end and found Loy breaking free. Loy capitalized on the solo breakaway by beating Marzec through his legs.

But instead of folding, St. John's picked up the pace and doubled

the Knights in shots over the last nine minutes of the period to finish with a 15-7 advantage.

The Titans tied the score on a highlight-reel goal from Hauenstein, a junior forward. Hauenstein skated into the slot, went to the backhand and held onto the puck before beating McAninch with 2:53 left in the second period.

St. John's had a slight shot advantage (8-6) in the scoreless third period. Marzec maintained the tie with a great save on a solo breakaway by Chris Jaeger.

"I was pretty nervous," Marzec said. "But I got mentally focused and settled in. The crowd got me fired up and I kept that intensity."

Marzec also made two nice saves on two 2-on-1 breakaways within the first 50 seconds of the second period.

The overtime was evenly played before Morris came through on a promise he had made to Marzec.

"Before the third period Ray made me promise not to give up a goal and I told him he had to promise me that he would get the goal," Marzec said. "He came over to me in overtime just before he scored and said 'Here you go.'"

St. John's beat St. Francis (22-12-4) twice this season and is making its second trip to the district finals in three years.

"Going in we knew it would be just like this," Hayes said. "We



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St. Francis' Chris Draeger gets thrown down in a sea of St. John's defenders in the first period.

knew it would come down to which ever would make the last save."

Trojans blank Wildcats

Findlay goalie Sean Brown stood on his head in the second district final at Tam O' Shanter last night.

The senior made 33 saves to lead the Trojans to a 1-0 blanking of Northview.

"You have to give complete credit to Sean," Northview coach

Jim Cooper said. "He was embarrassed by what happened two weeks ago and he doubled down his effort. He wanted to prove he could play. He's an amazing goalie."

Ryan Chance scored the game's lone goal midway through the first period on assists from Jeremy Horne and Drew Beardsley.

Brown made 11 saves in the first period, 13 in the second and nine in the final period.

Northview goalie Craig Trego

also played well for the Wildcats, making 19 stops.

Findlay (24-6-0) gave up nine goals the last time the two teams met. The Trojans meet St. John's in the district final at Tam O' Shanter next Saturday.

Northview (25-10-1) bows out in the semifinals after reaching the state championship game last season.

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