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GIRLS WATER POLO: North Penn edges Souderton in Eastern Conference Final

By KEV HUNTER
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Saturday, October 20, 2012



Emily Dunigan of North Penn, left, and Morgan Allison of Pennridge. Saturday October 20, 2012. Photo by Geoff Patton

FRANCONIA TWP — Three consecutive goals by Brittney Patterson and a couple key defensive stops by the Maiden defense pushed the North Penn girls water polo team to a come-from-behind 8-7 victory over Souderton Area in the Eastern Conference Championship Final Saturday night.

“In the first quarter and the fourth quarter, we really brought it as a team,” said Patterson, who finished with a game-high four goals. “(In the fourth), we got the ball moving around fast. Our spirits were definitely up. We just had to score in order to stay in it.”

The win secures the Maidens the top seed out of the East in next weekend’s state tournament out at Cumberland Valley. Souderton, Governor Mifflin and Pennridge also earned state berths.

Patterson scored from up top to bring the Maidens within 7-6 with 3 minutes and 45 seconds left to play, and she settled into the same spot about a minute later and again was able to rifle a shot past Indians keeper Kara Stegman to tie it at seven apiece.

The North Penn defense, which got a balanced effort throughout with two steals each by Patterson, Jenn Halcovage, Karlie Vogt and Tess O’Neill, was able to stop Souderton on its next possession, and then Patterson scored the go-ahead goal with 51 seconds to play, firing one in from the corner to make it an 8-7 North Penn lead.

After stops by each team, Souderton got one last chance with about eight seconds to play, and a desperation shot hit the post as time expired.

Kat Perkins’ seven saves helped the Maidens hold on.

“It feels really good, but we definitely have our work cut out for us at states,” Patterson said. “We want to bring it home.”

Laureana Zrada's hat trick led Souderton, which had a pair of two-goal leads in the fourth quarter but could not hold on.

The state championships start Friday at Cumberland Valley, and the boys state tournament will be held the following weekend at North Penn. Governor Mifflin, La Salle, North Penn and Souderton all earned state berths out of the East on the boys side.

Eastern Conference Final
at Souderton Area

North Penn 8,
Souderton Area 7

North Penn 2 2 0 4 - 8
Souderton 2 2 1 2 - 7

North Penn goals: Brittney Patterson 4, Jenn Halcovage 2, Becca Hoch 1, Tess O'Neill 1

Souderton goals: Laureana Zrada 3, Kaitlyn Roberts 1, Alyssa Santangelo 1, Megan Furey 1, Bronwyn Smith 1

Saves: Kat Perkins (NP) 7; Kara Stegman (S) 9

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