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WATER POLO: North Penn sweeps past Souderton

By KEV HUNTER

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FRANCONIA TWP — An inspired second half keyed North Penn's 9-8 comeback win over rival Souderton Area on Thursday night, as the Knights rallied multiple times to earn a conference win on the road.

"Towards the end of the game, everyone was starting to get tired but if your teammates are 100 percent into it mentally and you work together, when you do everything as a team, you can get things done," the Knights' Thanas Kountroubis said. "You can accomplish a lot."

Down 4-2 and later 5-4 in front of a boisterous Souderton crowd, the Knights (3-0) kept battling back and took their first lead of the second half just before the start of the fourth quarter.

After Souderton (2-4) tied it 7-7 — the sixth time in the contest the score was tied, North Penn pulled ahead for good with a goal by Kountroubis, his fifth of the contest. Cole Palumbo's second goal then gave the Knights some breathing room at 9-7

Souderton had a goal wiped off the board following a penalty and then did make it 9-8 with 20 seconds to play. The Knights passed it around to run out the clock and then could finally take a deep breath.

The comeback was complete.

"We got quite the speech at halftime," Kountroubis said. "Right after that, we all put in 100 percent effort and good things came."

Jon Krail, who had 11 saves in net for North Penn, kept Jordan Hay (three goals) and the rest of Big Red from pulling away early.

"We started off a little slow,"

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Knights coach Jason Grubb said. "Souderton came out pumped up and took it to us in the first half. We just had to recover from there."

The North Penn girls improved to 2-0 in the Suburban One League with a 10-6 win over Souderton in the first half of the doubleheader.

The Maidens' offense got it going early and then the defense shut down Souderton late, including a scoreless fourth quarter

North Penn keeper Kat Perkins was solid in net, stopping 13 Souderton shots.

"All of us connected out there really well and we played as a team instead of playing individually," Perkins said. "We all talked, did what we're supposed to do...(Going for a third straight state title), we just kind of take it game by game and we don't think too far ahead. We don't go into any game overconfident because you never know what could happen. There are really great teams out there so we just take it day by day."

Steph Galetta had her shot working for the Maidens, as she connected four times for scores.

"It was the first real test that we had this year," Maidens coach Bill Bartle said of the win. "Both teams lost a lot of people from last year and I have to give Souderton credit - they went down early and kept fighting back. They showed a lot of heart and so did our girls. It was a very good for us to come out with the win."

Sarah Hershey had a pair of goals to lead the Indians (2-4).

"The girls have improved tremendously just in the last two weeks," Big Red coach Joe Hay said. "(In the boys game), a play here or a play there and we win that game. We made some mistakes in the defensive hole position and (North Penn) drew a lot of kickouts and scored off of those kickouts, off the man-up situation. Their goalie played fantastic."

Boys Water Polo

North Penn 9,

Souderton 8

North Penn 2 0 4 3 - 9

Souderton 2 2 1 3 - 8

North Penn goals: Thanas Kountroubis 5; Kyle Supko 1; Shane Hennessey 1; Cole Palumbo 2

Souderton goals: Lucas Giannini 2; Ryan Witoslawski 2; Tristan Loux 1; Jordan Hay 3

Saves: Jon Krail (NP) 11; Ryan Kierstan (S) 14

Girls Water Polo

North Penn 10,

Souderton 6

North Penn 4 4 2 0 - 10

Souderton 1 3 2 0 - 6

North Penn goals: Aimee Baur 2; Julie Krout 1; Steph Galetta 4; Erin O'Neill 3

Souderton goals: Kayla Rush 1; Shannon Paparella 1; Sarah Hershey 2; April Kichline 1; Gabriella Pagano 1

Saves: Kat Perkins (NP) 13; Rickilee Hodges (S) 14

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