

Observer Sports

Shamrock Laxmen Spoil Larries Determined Effort

By ALAIN ST. PIERRE
Sports Editor
BRASHER — It doesn't happen often, but sometimes hard work

and a determined effort just aren't enough.
Case in point; Salmon River Central's 15-4 win over St. Lawrence

Central in Northern Athletic Conference varsity lacrosse on Monday. "It would be easy to go over and pick out the bad things but that's not what's important," said Larries coach Tim Hayes. "I don't think any one of our kids went out there and didn't give their best. Everyone gave 100 percent. They worked hard right to the end of the game."

"Salmon River was the toughest team we've played this season and we just got beat," he added. Anthony Gray led the Shamrocks attack with four goals and two assists. Mike Benedict netted two and assisted on two others. Adam Thompson and Steve Thomas each scored two and set up another. Craig Cree also scored twice while Joey Phillips, Art Montour and Charlie Thompson picked up a goal apiece in the win. Alex Garrow had a strong outing between the pipes for the Shamrocks making 15 saves, nine in the first half alone.

Senior playmaker Mike Mahoney led the Larries effort with three assists. Chad St. Hilaire, Gary Collette, Ben Derouche and Mike Dow scored solo tallies while Andre Gardner handled nine shots.

The Shamrocks jumped out to an early 4-0 lead in the first quarter but the Larries rallied with three straight to cut the margin to 4-3 midway into the second quarter. The Shamrocks then reeled off four straight points, including three goals in a 28-second span in the final minute of the first half, to take an 8-3 lead heading into halftime.

"We got out to that quick lead and I think the players sort of relaxed a bit," said Salmon River coach Dave White. "They came back and had us on the ropes a bit but we ran off those four goals late in the first half and gave ourselves a bit of a cushion to start the second half."

The Shamrocks started the second half the way they ended the first scoring six unanswered goals in the third quarter to take a commanding 14-3 lead. The Larries scored late in the quarter to make

it 14-4 but Salmon River got that one back with the lone goal of the fourth.

"Some of the guys were a bit down at the half but even after falling so far behind in the third quarter they stuck to playing the game right to the end," said Hayes. "They wanted to get back into the game but we just couldn't seem to get over the hump."

"It was really frustrating but the kids didn't lose their composure. They kept their heads in the game," he added.

According to Hayes, one reason the Larries "couldn't get over the hump" was the work of Garrow in the Shamrocks' goal.

"We got back into the game but we just couldn't seem to beat Garrow to tie the game. We had some chances but he came up big. Last year, I think he would have been a bit rattled by the run we made but he's matured a lot. He's turned into one of the top field lacrosse goalies around and I can't say enough about how he played," Hayes said.

White also cited the work of his netminder.

"He deserves a lot of credit," said White. "He made nine saves in the first half and kept us in the game when St. Lawrence had us on our heels. He did a good job for us last season and I think he's playing with a lot more confidence this year. He's more of a proven player now and doesn't have to worry so much about proving himself."

Hayes said another factor leading to the Larries demise on Tuesday was the Shamrocks' patience on offense.

"They pass the ball around the perimeter and make you want to go out and play them. When you do, they find the guy cutting underneath. They really thrived on that against us," he added.

White singled out the Shamrocks transition game as a leading contributor to the win.

"Our transition game has been one of our strengths this year and I thought it did pretty well today

(Tuesday)," said White. "The three goals we got near the end of the first half came off of situations where we won the face-off, got the

ball to the side then moved it up field for the shot."

While the loss was "discouraging," White said, "it was a learning experience."

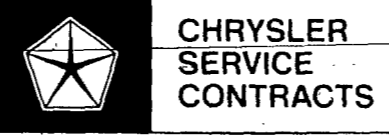
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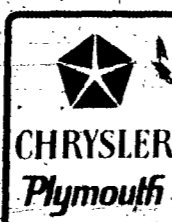


MOVING IN — Steve Thomas scored two goals and assisted on another in the Shamrocks 15-4 win over St. Lawrence Central on Tuesday. Here he moves in to make a play against the Larries. (St. Pierre Photo)



ON THE PROWL — Senior Derek Bellinger is one of St. Lawrence Central's key defenses. Here he moves out to take on a Salmon River attacker. (St. Pierre Photo)

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