

Northeast Conference

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For Immediate Release

November 14, 2010

Monmouth Wins Second Straight Northeast Conference Mens' Soccer Title With 1-0 Win Over Saint Francis (PA)

West Long Branch, NJ -- Top-seeded Monmouth lived up to its lofty #13 national ranking, winning its second consecutive Northeast Conference (NEC) Men's Soccer championship on Sunday afternoon with a 1-0 win over #3 seed Saint Francis (PA) on the Great Lawn in West Long Branch, NJ. It marked the fourth NEC title for the Hawks, who will now represent the league in the NCAA Tournament.

The tightly contested match saw the game remain scoreless until the 59th minute when the six-time defending NEC regular champion Hawks broke through on a set piece. Senior defender **Anthony Vazquez (Belford, NJ/Middletown North (St. John's))** served up a free kick from near midfield deep into the right side of the box. NEC Player of the Year **Ryan Kinne (Naugatuck, CT/Naugatuck)** slid between two Red Flash defenders and headed the ball across the goal mouth in the direction of freshman forward **Jacob Rubinstein (Ocean, NJ/Ocean Township)**, who elevated in the air to one touch the ball past Saint Francis sophomore keeper **Daniel Valcicak (Herndon, VA/Gonzaga College)**.

"It's almost become expected for Jacob (Rubinstein) to score big goals in big games for us," said Monmouth head coach Rob McCourt. "He's a handful for everyone."

Less than two minutes after Rubinstein's tally, the Red Flash had a chance at the equalizer. Sophomore forward **Wayne Tiller (Magnolia, DE/Caesar Rodney)** took a pass from senior midfielder **Patrick Fleming (Dunedin, New Zealand/Bayfield)** near the right corner of the 18-yard box. Tiller's near post shot was stopped by Meredith.

Monmouth (14-1-4) made a concerted effort to force the pressure even after the goal. With 23 minutes remaining, Kinne sent a free kick to the far post that Vazquez leaped for but touched the ball with his thigh and hit it over the bar. Vazquez created an opportunity for himself in the 83rd minute, controlling a ball near the top of the 18-yard box before rocketing a right footed shot just outside the corner of the goal.

Saint Francis (11-7-1) had one last flurry in the final moments, including a header by sophomore **James Price (Christchurch, New Zealand/St. Andrews College)** with 1:26 to go, but MU senior keeper **Bryan Meredith (Scotch Plains, NJ/Scotch Plains-Fan-**

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Bryant University (2012-13) • Central Connecticut State University • Fairleigh Dickinson University
Long Island University • Monmouth University • Mount St. Mary's University • Quinnipiac University
Robert Morris University • Sacred Heart University • St. Francis (NY) College
Saint Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

2010 Northeast Conference Men's Soccer Championship

*Hosted by Monmouth University
West Long Branch, NJ*

Championship

Sunday, November 14

#1 Monmouth 1, #3 Saint Francis (PA) 0

Semifinals

Friday, November 12

#1 Monmouth 1, #4 Fairleigh Dickinson 0
#3 Saint Francis (PA) 2, #2 Sacred Heart 1 (OT)



wood) was up to the task.

Monmouth ended the game with a 14-8 edge in shots and had eight corners, compared to two for Saint Francis.

"I couldn't be more proud of these guys and where the program is at this point," said McCourt. "Saint Francis deserves a lot of credit. I wish more teams from the conference could get in. NEC soccer is underrated. There are many teams that could compete in the NCAA Tournament and do well."

Meredith, the NEC Tournament Most Valuable Player, had four saves to post his second shutout of the tournament and league-leading 11th of the season. Valcicak turned away three shots for the Red Flash.

"It's always an honor to win a championship, especially back-to-back, and four regular season championships in four years," said Meredith after the match. "Not many guys get to experience the things we have done here."

Monmouth had the first scoring chance eight minutes into the game when Kinne's header forced Valcicak to make a sprawling save. He had another golden opportunity in the 39th minute when sophomore midfielder **Ryan Clark (Freehold, NJ/Freehold Township)** found Kinne's feet, but his shot went high over the net. For the Red Flash, there were a pair of opportunities on long shots from **Tyler Hibbs (St. Catherine Canada/Governor Simcoe)** - which sailed over the crossbar - and junior forward **Kingsley McLeod (Rocky Mount, NC/Rocky Mount)**, but Monmouth senior keeper **Bryan Meredith (Scotch Plains, NJ/Scotch Plains-Fanwood)** made the save. Monmouth held a 7-6 shot advantage in the first half with each keeper making a pair of saves.

The Hawks will learn their NCAA opponent during Monday's selection show at 4:30 pm on ESPNNews. Last season, Monmouth hosted a first round game on the Great Lawn, besting UConn by a 4-3 margin in penalty kicks. The Hawks then fell at Harvard in the second round by a 3-0 score. Monmouth will enter the postseason unbeaten in its last 12 matches (8-0-4).

"It doesn't matter where we go or who we are playing (in the NCAA Tournament)," noted McCourt. "Just getting in is what matters. It never gets old."

"We've got a full, healthy team," said Meredith. "Everyone knows what to expect and we're not the underdog anymore. Last year's NCAA experience will certainly help us."

Saint Francis (PA) ended its year with a single-season school record 11 victories. It marked the third time in program history that the Red Flash advanced to the NEC title match, all ending with 1-0 setbacks.

"Monmouth is a great side," said Saint Francis head coach Michael Casper. "We had our opportunities, but couldn't find the back of the net today. Hats off to Monmouth for a great game. They will represent the Northeast Conference very well in the NCAA Tournament. Our guys have now seen what it is like to play at this level. We will talk to them about what we need to do during our offseason to improve so we can take this one step further next year."

NEC All-Tournament Team

Bryant Meredith (MU, Sr, GK), Tournament MVP

Ryan Kinne (MU, Sr, MF)

Max Hamilton (MU, Jr, MF)

Anthony Vazquez (MU, Sr, D)

Patrick Fleming (SFPA, Sr, MF)

Benjamin Kujawa (SFPA, Sr, D)

Sean O'Reilly (SFPA, Sr, MF)

Marcello Castro (SHU, So, MF)

Edwin Victor (SHU, So, MF)

Samson Malijani (FDU, Sr, F)

Karlis Putans (FDU, So, D)