

THE NEW JERSEY SOCCER GROUP

Press Release



Millburn, NJ, July 19th 2009

Magic Progress after Playoff win

The Millburn Magic continued their post-season run yesterday, with a 2-0 win at home over Bay State Select in the Women's Premier Soccer League (WPSL) first round playoff game at Millburn High School. The win, Millburn's fifth in their last six outings, puts them in the semi-finals of the East region playoffs, where they travel to Lancaster Inferno this Tuesday, July 21st, 6:30pm kick off.

Millburn started the game well, with a strong defensive base, and Shira Averbuch and Tara Ricciardi probing from midfield. 10 minutes into the game they had their first chance, Katie Ryan firing over after good work from Kim Malecki on the right. Despite that close escape for the visitors, Millburn's opening goal wasn't long in coming, Kat Sheleigh linking up with Laura Kurash, whose through ball found Katie Ryan to finish well in the 17th minute. Millburn continued to create the better chances, Sheeleigh twice getting into good positions on her left, and Ryan lobbing the keeper but putting the ball just over the crossbar, as the home team missed chances to add a second. While Bay State held possession well in midfield, they rarely threatened Millburn's goal, until an effort from Jenni Roncarati in the 38th minute forced Magic keeper Lia Fierro into a sharp save low to her left. That spurred the New Jersey team into action, and when Kurash found some space in midfield, her pass split the defense to find Ryan, whose low driven shot in the 41st minute found the back of the net and made the half-time score 2-0 to Millburn.

Bay State started the second half with renewed purpose, twice firing narrowly over the crossbar from good positions as they tried to force a breakthrough. The Magic, meanwhile, sat back on their lead, and were content to play on the break, Amanda Malkiewicz a constant threat, bending a low effort just wide of the post after good work on the left. Having absorbed Bay State pressure, the Magic dominated possession and took the sting out of the game in the final twenty minutes, although replacement keeper Robin Chernow had to make a couple of smart stops as they moved comfortably to a semi-final clash at Lancaster, who had shocked Boston Aztecs 3-1 away on Saturday. Favorites and #1 seeds the Long Island Fury host New England Mutiny in the other semi-final this Wednesday.



Midfielder Laura Kurash

"It was almost a surreal game", noted Millburn Head Coach Andy Sones. "I don't think Bay State were at their strongest, so I was pleased that could get the job done without any drama". With key midfielders Katy Fissel and Lara Kaminski both injured for the remainder of the season, Sones was also pleased to be able to avoid injuries. "Lancaster will be a tough game", he noted, "and for us to have lost more injuries would have been devastating, particularly in midfield." As the Magic hope to further extend a season has already surpassed most expectations, they will be looking to find another high as they visit the Inferno, with a place in the Regional final as the prize.

Magic Line Up: Lia Fierro, Biz Shenk, Lina Staropoli, Ashley Ventura, Shira Averbuch, Tara Ricciardi, Laura Kurash, Kelly Sims, Kim Malecki, Katie Ryan, Kat Sheeleigh, **Subs:** Leah Jerome (19), Amanda Malkiewicz (45), Katelin Blaine (45), Kelly Feeney (45), Carly Bray (69), Robin Chernow (75).

Bay State Line Up: Stephanie Gordon, Danielle Gordon, Emily Milone, Jennifer Leaverton, Shayla Costa, Kristina Cardoso, Lindsay Cunningham, Ana Moniz, Jenna Roncarati, Skyy Anderson. **Subs:** Kelly Regan, Erin Kaufman, Rebecca Fish, Lynette Zickl

More about the Millburn Magic at
More about the New Jersey Soccer Group at
More about the WPSL at

www.MillburnMagic.com
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