
Lacrosse

Bears get unfamiliar foe at state

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By Adam Cairns/ThisWeek

Upper Arlington's Susan Dappen (left) congratulates Erin Junk after she scored one of her six goals May 21 during a 19-12 victory over Thomas Worthington in a regional final.



By Adam Cairns/ThisWeek

The Golden Bears' Caitlin Oberlin breaks through the defense of Thomas Worthington's Michaela Cook (left) and Rachel Hawkins.

Of the three other Division I state semifinalists, the Upper Arlington High School girls lacrosse team has played two.

But the one the Golden Bears haven't faced -- Hudson -- is the one they will see in their semifinal at 6:30 p.m. Friday at Medina. The winner will advance to the final at 1 p.m. Saturday at Medina against Cincinnati Sycamore, which UA beat 14-9 on May 3 to end the Aviators' 34-game winning streak, or Chagrin Falls, which UA beat 13-9 on April 29.

In last year's final, Sycamore edged the Bears 9-7.

Hudson, which UA last played three years ago when it beat the Explorers 16-8 in a state semifinal, rallied from a 4-1 deficit to beat Shaker Heights Hathaway Brown 9-6 in a regional final May 21 to improve to 18-1. Its loss was to Chagrin Falls 11-10 on April 17.

Upper Arlington is 19-2 after beating Thomas Worthington 19-12 in a regional semifinal on May 21 at Dublin Jerome.

"Hudson is definitely going to be a challenge," coach Lynda McCandlish said. "They're a team from the North Division so we're not as familiar with them, but we're looking at it as an opportunity to showcase our talent."

Hudson is led by Mackenzie Parsons (66 goals, 4 assists), Elizabeth Baglieri (54 goals, 16 assists) and Jaqui Gemberling (165 saves, .594 save percentage).

"We're going to be excited about whoever we get to play, if we make to the state final," McCandlish said.

Sycamore defeated Columbus Academy 12-7 in a regional final May 21. The Aviators are led by Emile Hunter (65 goals, 32 assists), Becca McLouth (66 goals, 10 assists) and Lily Ricci (44 goals, 22 assists).

"We're very familiar with their style of play," McCandlish said. "They're a talented team which we have played over the years. It's going to be a matter of coming out hard and who wants it more."

Chagrin Falls, a state semifinalist last year, avenged a 14-all tie with Medina on April 24 by winning 20-9 on May 21 to improve to 17-2-1. The Tigers are led by Megan Tackas (57 goals, 43 assists), Tina Montello (67 goals, 29 assists) and Dana Burello (149 saves, .532 save percentage).

"Chagrin Falls is also a very good team," McCandlish said. "They have a couple of really good girls who are going to be the focus if we face them again."

•**REGIONAL FINAL** -- Erin Junk had no idea she was going to play such an important role in the regional final.

But Junk, an attacker, scored a career-high six goals -- including two in the final two minutes of the first half -- as the Golden Bears advanced to a state semifinal for the seventh time in eight years.

"I'm just happy and grateful," she said. "Our whole team wanted to have a great season, not only for the seniors but also for our new coach. It feels great to relive part of what we did last year, but this year we're hoping to go all the way."

UA had to get past a determined Thomas. The Cardinals, who finished 13-7, pulled within 9-6 with two minutes left in the first half. In the final two minutes, Junk scored two goals and Kelly Mason scored in the last 30 seconds to push the lead up to 12-6.

"A lot of different people stepped up, but Erin had a great game," McCandlish said.

"After Thomas closed in, we just came out hard and wanted to score some goals."

The Cardinals, who lost to UA 7-6 last year in a regional final, trailed by as much as 18-9.

Mason had four goals and Lindsay Godard and Avery Toothman had three UA.

For Thomas, Tara Benninger scored three goals and Megan Strasser and Hannah Tikson had two.

•The top-seeded **boys** team was 15-3 before playing fourth-seeded Dublin Coffman last Wednesday in a Division I regional semifinal, with the winner advancing to the final Saturday against second-seeded Thomas Worthington or third-seeded Olentangy.

UA beat Thomas 6-4 on April 25 and Olentangy 14-4 on April 12.

Olentangy beat Westerville North 13-11 last Saturday to improve to 15-2 and run its winning streak to five. Thomas beat Hilliard Darby 16-4 last Saturday to improve to 13-6 and run its winning streak to four.

The regional champion will play in a state semifinal at home Wednesday, likely against Cincinnati Moeller or Cincinnati St. Xavier. UA beat Moeller 18-9 on April 5 and St. Xavier 11-5 on May 9.

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