

## Sports News

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### Beginning spells the end for UA girls' title hopes

By [MICHAEL ALWOOD](#)

There are many ways to dissect a given game.

Girls high school lacrosse, for example, is divided into two 25-minute halves.

But Upper Arlington's 9-7 loss to Sycamore in the Division I Ohio Schoolgirls Lacrosse Association state championship game Saturday was split into four unequal parts.

The Aviators made the first five minutes of each half their exclusive periods and allowed the host Golden Bears to own the remaining 40 minutes. While it may sound like fuzzy math, the equation worked for Sycamore.

The Aviators scored four goals in the first five minutes of the game and tacked on three goals in the first five minutes of the second half to build an advantage the Bears could never overcome.

"I think we knew it was coming," senior co-captain Erika Brooker said. "Sycamore is a really good team that always comes out strong. I don't know what happened. We told ourselves that we needed to come out strong too, but we just couldn't pull it together. We played really well though. It was one of the best games we played. We're proud of ourselves even though we didn't come out on top."

"That's the way they play, and we were looking for those on our end," coach Wendy Gallapoo added. "We just couldn't get them going. We had a real hard time winning that draw and then when we did get it down there the slow attack just wasn't working real well for us. We scored off every play we ran and I feel like we probably should have run more plays."

The Bears got into the championship contest with a 17-4 whitewashing of Hathaway Brown Friday. Brooker and Molly Everett scored three goals each. In all, 10 Bears notched goals Friday with Nancy Baker and Lindsay Godard getting two each.

Saturday's story was quite different as only Tori Conway had multiple goals with two. Brooker, Erin Junk, Everett, Elizabeth Narwicz and Chelsea Kuznik claimed the others.

The Bears chipped away at the Aves' lead all through the game but Sycamore's defense kept them at bay long enough to salt away the win.

"It was the shortest state championship game I've ever coached," Gallapoo said. "I don't know if it was just the time running down on my career or what, but it went by too fast."

Adding drama to the moment was the realization that the Arlington coach was overseeing her final game. After 16 years running the program, Gallapoo is stepping aside.

Her players were keenly aware of the situation and regretted not earning Gallapoo her fourth state title (UA won in 2002, 2004 and 2005) but were nonetheless proud of their efforts.

"It's her last year and we wanted to go out on a high note, but we really did," Conway said. "We had a valiant effort and we gave it our all. Had we not given it our all she wouldn't be proud of us. But she was proud of us for the way we went out and the way she went out. I think she goes out on a high note anyway."

"We all wanted to win for her," Brooker said. "I'm sad that we didn't get to win states for her one last time. But she's proud of us and we're proud of what she's done for us."

"They don't have to put numbers up on the board to win for me," Gallapoo responded. "I feel like I have been blessed with the years I've been here, working with fabulous athletes, great parents and a supportive administration. It really doesn't matter what the scoreboard reads. This is a first-class operation with first-class kids. I feel lucky to have been on that ride. I can't imagine being a part of anything better than this."

Sycamore closed the book on a 20-0 season with its championship win while the Bears ended the year at 17-4.

"We had a great season," Brooker said. "A lot of people didn't expect us to get this far considering what happened last year in the tournament. We didn't even make it to the state tournament last year so we're really proud that we came this far. We did our best and we had a great season."

Brooker, Everett, Caitlin Oberlin and Maggie McGreevey were all named to the all-tournament team following the championship.

While there were lots of tears coming from the Bears after the loss, Gallapoo remained upbeat. She showed no signs of regret for the way things turned out and indeed seemed genuinely pleased with the Bears in defeat.

"I'm so proud of them," she said. "I was proud of the way they played and proud of the way they handled themselves. They were in it to win it and they never gave up. Not only that, I'm proud of who they are. They have matured tremendously as a group."



News photo by Michael Alwood  
The Upper Arlington bench erupts following senior Tori Conway's second goal of the Division I state championship game Saturday.



Junior midfielder Caroline Blosser (right) tries to outrun Sycamore defender Kelsey Beck during the Golden Bears' 9-7 loss to the Aviators Saturday.



Golden Bears coach Wendy Gallapoo and co-captains (from left) Tori Conway, Erika Brooker and Molly Everett accept the Division I girls lacrosse state runner-up trophy after the championship game at Upper Arlington Saturday.

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