



HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

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State Soccer Championships / Class AAA* Boys -- Eastlake Beats Mead For Title

By **Rob Blethen**
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PUYALLUP - The Eastlake boys soccer team can finally relax and celebrate.

The Wolves did what people expected of them all year, beating Mead of Spokane 2-1 and winning the Class AAA* state boys soccer championship last night at Sparks Stadium.

"Everybody was saying we were supposed to win it, and we finally proved them right," said **Chris Farnsworth**, Eastlake forward.

Eastlake (19-0-1), ranked 14th in the nation, controlled the ball much of the first half after some early flurries from Mead.

The Redmond ** school went ahead 1-0, 3:30 before halftime, on an unassisted putback goal from **Farnsworth** from 20 yards, his 20th goal this season.

Mead finally tied it up 1-1 21:10 into the second half when Mark Lupton made a free kick from 19 yards.

Eastlake charged back three minutes later after **Farnsworth** was knocked down and drew a penalty kick for the Wolves. **Michael Casale** sent it into the upper right corner, just out of the goalkeeper's reach.

The Panthers put pressure on the Wolves' defense the rest of the way, but could not score.

"The last two minutes I was pretty nervous," said **Brian Jones**, Eastlake goalie. "That was probably the most tense moments I've ever had. It feels good."

The third-year school from Redmond ** was playing in its **first boys state soccer playoffs**.

* **Editor Note:** WIAA enrollment classifications were revised in the fall of 1997 when the 2A classification was created, moving 2A to 3A and 3A to 4A, so Eastlake is now reflected as the 4A Champion for 1996 (and 1997) on WIAA historical records, but was correctly reported by the Seattle Times in this story as the State 1996 3A Champion (the largest school classification existing at that time.).

** **Editor Note:** This Seattle Times article was written before Sammamish was incorporated in 1999, hence the references to Eastlake being a Redmond school were also correct at the time of this story's original publication.

Despite their postseason inexperience, the Wolves were a favorite to win state all year because they have nine Olympic Development players.

"Teams from Spokane are normally very physical, fast and strong," Eastlake Coach Jon Matsushita said. "This team showed that tonight."

The Wolves advanced to the final by beating KingCo Conference rival Woodinville 1-0 in the semifinals Friday night on a late goal from **Casale**. Their quarterfinal 1-0 victory over Kentwood also came down to a late goal.

Mead advanced by beating Rogers of Puyallup 2-1 in the other semifinal game Friday night, on a late goal from Ben Brodski.

Mead (19-2) played on emotion last night. It was the final game for their coach, Dick Cullen.

The sophomore- and junior-dominated Wolves should return to the playoffs next for another title run.

"As a coach, it's a relief to end up on the high end of the score in a game like this," Matsushita said.

Third-place game

Woodinville 1, Rogers 0 - After being held scoreless in a 1-0 semifinal loss to Eastlake, Woodinville was eager for redemption in the third-place game. Woodinville edged Rogers of Puyallup on a first-half goal from Ryan Velo-Simpson, capping a 15-5-1 season.

The game was physical from the start, escalating 11 minutes in when Rogers goalkeeper Christian Clausnitzer took down Woodinville forward Ian Hagan in front of the goal with an arm around the neck. They exchanged words, prompting the official to issue both red cards, an automatic rejection.

Aaron Anderson was inserted in the goal for Rogers, but both teams were forced to play with 10 players for the rest of the game.

Rogers finished fourth with a 16-2-1 record.