

Calvert Hall, Curley claim MIAA lacrosse titles with dominant performances

TOWSON – Calvert Hall lacrosse coach Bryan Kelly gathered his players to tell them a story about Jesus walking on water.

It was a lesson they needed about staying focused and grounded.

That was especially important during a week with so much hype surrounding the Cardinals heading into the Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association A conference championship game against St. Mary's of Annapolis.

“When Peter asked Jesus, ‘Can I walk on water in the storm?’ Jesus said ‘yes,’” Kelly told his players. “When Peter starting focusing on the storms and all of that stuff he sunk. When you start focusing on people saying how good we are, how great we are, you’re going to sink. When you start focusing on what people say negatively about us, you’re going to sink. Focus on doing your job, and having fun and playing lacrosse and you’ll stay on the water.”

The speech resonated with his players, and with a chance to make history within their grasp, the Cardinals had one of their finest performances of a remarkable season.

Calvert Hall ran past St. Mary's, 15-7, before 3,231 at Towson University's Johnny Unitas Stadium May 17, becoming the first team in the history of the MIAA to win three consecutive A Conference championships.

St. Paul's was the last school in the conference, formerly the Maryland Scholastic Association, to win three straight titles outright, way back in 1951-1953. The Crusaders also won three straight championships from 1969-71 but shared the title with Gilman (1970) and Calvert Hall (1971) the latter two years.

It was the Cardinals' fifth MIAA title, also the best in the history of the conference. Both Loyola Blakefield and Boys' Latin have four championships.

Grant Mitchell and Daniel Kelly led Calvert Hall with three goals apiece. Cole Herbert had two goals and three assists, while freshman Truitt Sunderland also finished with two goals and two assists.

This night was all about the team effort.

The Calvert Hall lacrosse team embraces the Christian Brothers ethics of selflessness and respect. That philosophy translated onto the turf by the way the Cardinals share the ball.

Calvert Hall opened a 7-1 lead early in the second quarter with a different player scoring each time. St. Mary's never recovered from that barrage.

"We practice like we play each and every week," said Mitchell, who added a pair of assists. "We play free and can move the ball to each player. Anybody can have their day. Today, we had several players with points. People found the cage because of our ability to play with gratitude and share the ball."

Since losing to Hill Academy of Canada on March 13, the Cardinals reeled off 15 consecutive wins. Calvert Hall scored 265 goals total and allowed 99 goals.

"Being in the championship the last two years helped a lot of us to just be loose," said senior Jack Sawyer, who had a goal and five assists. "We didn't have the nerves

a lot of people have coming in this game.”

St. Mary’s (13-6), which beat Boys’ Latin, 11-5, in the semifinals, won the conference title in 2015 and 1996. Calvert Hall won the regular season matchup with the Saints, 13-9, on April 9 and was just too strong to overcome, leading 14-2 late in third quarter.

Scout Ripley had three goals for St. Mary’s, while B.J. Burlace scored twice. Goalie Wes Schmidt finished with 14 saves.

“St. Mary’s lacrosse 2019 had a successful season,” Saints coach Victor Lilly said. “We lost the championship here tonight. But all and all for the program’s sake, you get up to the pinnacle of the A conference championship game, and we come up on the short end, but we’ll see if we can do better for next year.”

Archbishop Curley 12, Glenelg Country 3

Archbishop Curley junior midfielder Nate Rollins set the tone and the rest of the Friars followed his lead.

Coach Chris Ogle did not expect any less.

Rollins scored three goals with one assist, and won seven of 13 faceoffs, leading Curley to a 12-3 victory over Glenelg Country School in the MIAA B conference championship game at Johnny Unitas Stadium.

“Nate Rollins is a spark plug for us,” said Ogle, who was still dripping from his post-game ice bath. “His ability to not only win faceoffs, but play offense and also play defense, he is a true do-it-all type of middie. He really get us going.”

After Glenelg (14-5) scored the game’s opening goal eight seconds into the game, the Friars never trailed again. Curley (14-3) put the game away with seven

consecutive goals from the late in the first half through the fourth quarter.

The teams split their regular-season series with the road team winning each time.

“We just worked really hard,” Rollins said. “We focused more on practice than we did before and left it all out on the field.”

It was Curley’s first lacrosse title since it won back-to-back championships in 2007 and 2008. Glenelg County was looking for first MIAA championship in lacrosse.

Lee Rock and Gage Coolahan had two goals apiece for Curley. Josh Knapp added a goal and two assists, while goalie Sean Roesener had 10 saves.

“We have a good class of kids,” Ogle said. “We knew we’d be strong defensively, but we had a lot of parts to replace offensively. We just got better offensively throughout the year. We really focused on playing hard and playing smart.”

This story was updated at 11:04 a.m. May 18 to correct an error in the reporting of the final score of the Calvert Hall-St. Mary’s game. This story was updated at 9:55 p.m. May 19 to correct the name of the head coach for Archbishop Curley. The Review apologizes for the errors.