

Griffins Win Regional Title – Set Up Grudge Match Against Columbia In Sectional Semifinals

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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ROXANA – It wasn't exactly smooth sailing, but the Father McGivney Catholic High School boys soccer team captured the Class 1A Regional Championship Friday afternoon after defeating the Staunton Bulldogs by a score of 4-1.

It was actually Staunton who struck first, and they did so in the 16th minute. After a McGivney defender tried to play the ball back to their keeper, the pass went array and hit the crossbar, nearly resulting in an own goal. The ball bounced off the woodwork and landed right at the feet of Staunton's sophomore forward Rhyse Rucker. He put it away easily to take the lead.

After the freak goal, McGivney was a little disoriented, but they figured themselves out quickly.

Sophomore midfielder Mason Holmes drilled the crossbar from about 20 yards out in the 27th minute. Less than 60 seconds later Holmes got the assist on fellow sophomore midfielder Aaron Broadwater's goal.

In the 34th minute, senior forward Daniel Gierer got on the board to take the lead right before halftime.

Coming out of the gate Staunton had a good chance rattle off the bar two minutes into the half. It was their last quality chance of the game.

From there the Griffins took over. In the 63rd minute, they had a corner kick. Senior forward Owen Terrell delivered the cross right to junior defender Noah Gardner. He struck the ball first time as he rifled it into the top corner making it 3-1.

Gierer delivered an inviting cross in toward Holmes in the 71st minute, but he headed the ball off the post and away.

Five minutes later Broadwater grabbed his second and his team's fourth goal to make it 4-1 in the 76th minute.

McGivney ran the clock out and ended up celebrating their first regional title since 2019.

Griffins head coach Matthew McVicar was the assistant in that 2019 run, but now he's winning his first in the main coaching position.

"I'm feeling great. It didn't play out how we wanted it to, but we still came out on top. So, it feels good," he said.

With the win, the Griffins improve to 15-7-2 on the season and have now won three straight.

They'll now match up with a very good Columbia team, one that beat them 6-0 in the first game of the season. The Eagles come into the game with a 16-6-1 record.

That Sectional Semifinal game will be played on Tuesday, October 18th. Kickoff is set for 5 p.m. from Althoff Catholic High School in Belleville.

“Columbia, we have some unfinished business after the first game of the year. They took it to us pretty hard,” McVicar said. “I think we’ve accomplished a lot as a team since then and it will be a true test of what we’re capable of.”