

# **Paniagua's Hat Trick Leads Marquette Past Jersey And Into Regional Final Game Against Triad On Saturday**

by Bradley Piros, Reporter  
October 20 2022 9:24 AM



TROY - The Marquette Explorers had a bit of a slow start Wednesday night against the Jersey Panthers. Conditions were once again cold and windy for this game's 7 p.m. start time in the Class 2A Regional Semifinal game held at Triad High School.

After giving up an early goal to the Panthers in the 7th minute and not being able to finish a plethora of their early chances, Marquette seemed to be getting a little frustrated with themselves in the first 15 minutes of the game.

"I thought we did a fine job creating chances, but you got to finish them, and we didn't finish them," Marquette head coach Brian Hoener said postgame.

"I think we started a little bit slow, and when you get behind and have to chase the game a little bit, you start to panic and rush," he said. "I thought we rushed some of our finishing opportunities, but after we saw the first one go in the net I thought we settled down and started to get back to the way we play."

Marquette's first goal came from the team's leading goal scorer, senior forward Myles Paniagua. He scored in the 16th minute to tie the game back up. He let out a sigh of relief after finally getting on the board; he was just getting started.

The Explorers grabbed a couple more goals before halftime in the 32nd and 36th minutes. Sophomore midfielder Jude Keller scored what would end up being the game-winning goal followed by Paniagua's second of the night.

"You want to create some separation at any point in the game and I thought us creating that separation before halftime helped in a lot of ways settle us down and maybe put them a little bit on edge," Hoener said.

"Then we got one early in the second half that sort of put the game to bed and allowed us to play freer and took the wind out of their sails."

That goal came four minutes into the second half when senior midfielder Dre Davis scored to make it 4-1. He also had an assist on the night.

Five minutes later Paniagua wrapped up his hat trick.

"He's a good player," Hoener said about Paniagua postgame. "He puts himself in really good spots, he can score in multiple ways, he's a hard worker, he's physical, he does a lot of things really well, and he's been great for us all year."

The scoring was wrapped up with just over a minute to play when freshman midfielder Maicol Gonzalez made it 6-1.

The win moves Marquette to 17-5 on the season and into the Regional Finals on Saturday. They'll take on the Triad Knights (17-3) at 3 p.m. in Troy.

The two teams met once this season back on October 1st. The Explorers hosted the game at Gordon Moore Park and were defeated by a score of 6-1.

Hoener knows that it wasn't his team's best day out in that game saying that they can play a lot better. That game on Oct. 1st at one point was 2-1 before the Knights scored four unanswered.

"Triad's a very good program, a traditional power in this area and we're going to have to play really well to stay in the game, but it should be a fun environment and a good game," Hoener said.

"I just hope we can respond to the challenge because they're quite the challenge."

Triad beat Highland 6-0 to earn their spot in the Regional Finals.