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HS GIRLS' LACROSSE: WESTWOOD 14, FRANKLIN 10

No. 1 Westwood connects late in highly anticipated girls' lacrosse battle with No. 5 Franklin

By **Ryan Martin** Globe correspondent, Updated April 14, 2023, 8:03 p.m.



Westwood's Kella McGrail (left) races away from Franklin's Kaitlyn Carney. MARK STOCKWELL FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

FRANKLIN — In a matchup of two girls' lacrosse powers, top-ranked Westwood settled into a second-half rhythm to separate from fifth-ranked Franklin for a 14-10 win Friday afternoon at Pisini Stadium.

With the score tied at 10 and just under seven minutes remaining, the Wolverines (4-1) rattled off four unanswered goals.

“It took us a while, but we had to settle [ourselves],” Westwood coach Margot Spatola said. “Finally, everyone took a collective deep breath. We started winning the ball and possessing.”

UMass commit Ava Connaughton netted the winner , which came after two Franklin goals in a 90-second span. Connaughton (four goals) found a hole in Franklin's defense and sniped the top left corner over sophomore goaltender Ella Mahoney (18 saves). Mahoney, who shined with 14 first-half saves, was pressured frequently in the final period.



Westwood's Lil Hancock tries to find an opening against Franklin goalie Ella Mahoney. MARK STOCKWELL FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

“Our possessions on offense were really short-lived,” Franklin coach Kristin Guarino said after her team fell to 5-1. “We just didn’t have the ball enough, so we were playing a ton of defense.”

Connaughton was joined in the attack by sophomore Caroline Nozzolillo (3 goals) and senior Lillian Hancock (2 goals, 2 assists).

Franklin, which recently picked up its 100th consecutive league win, valued the experience of competitive nonleague play.

“This is the type of games we want. We have a lot of nonleague games coming up that we will continue to use and be better,” Guarino said.

Seniors Lindsay Atkinson (4 goals) and Jamie Tanner (3 goals) led the Panthers.



Westwood High head coach Margot Spatola said her team finally settled in the final seven minutes. MARK STOCKWELL FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE