

Apex shreds Tigers

Cougars advance to lacrosse state semifinals with 17-8 win.



Apex's Sarah Fellows (14)
moves the ball against
Chapel Hill's Hillary
Margolis (28).

*Photo by C.F. Ward for The
Cary News*

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By Tim Candon, Sports Editor

APEX —The holler came from the stands during a first-half timeout with the Apex girls' lacrosse team leading Chapel Hill 4-1 — “C'mon Chapel Hill, you look good!”

But Apex looked and played better.

Five Cougars scored goals and Apex advanced to the N.C. High School Women's Lacrosse Association semifinals after pounding the Tigers 17-8 Thursday.

The quarterfinal match-up was set for a day earlier, but an afternoon thunderstorm forced the game to be postponed to Thursday.

Both teams were ready to take the field Wednesday, and it wasn't until the last minute that players learned they had to play another day.

“If anything, it gave us 24 more hours to get pumped and to think about how much we wanted it,” said Apex midfielder Lisa Cook, who had one goal.

Apex coach Jessica Trombley said the delay made her a tad nervous, but the Cougars didn't wait long to put her mind at ease. Chapel Hill scored the game's first goal, but Apex responded with six unanswered goals in a nine-minute stretch.

“I wasn't sure how into it the girls were, but they were having a lot of fun,” Trombley said. “They always say they play best when they're having fun.”

Courtney McLaughlin scored the first of her three goals at the 22:10 mark of the first half to tie the game at 1-1. Then goals by Cook, Sasha Vedock, Sarah Fellows, McLaughlin again and Alli Faulhaber put Apex up 6-1 with 13:24 left in the first half.

Fellows, who had six goals on the night, Faulhaber (three goals) and McLaughlin (three goals) each scored again before halftime, when Apex held a 9-2 advantage.

Apex never gave Chapel Hill a chance.

If the Cougars weren't building an attack, they were hounding the Tigers defensively. On the rare occasion that Chapel Hill was able to sustain an attack, Apex usually broke it up after just a few passes.

“We've tried to do that since the beginning of the season,” Trombley said. “We say defense is all the way from the attackers to the goalie. We want to be doubling all over the field.”

Apex's lead swelled to as big as 10 in the second half, when they continued to dominate the Tigers, and was never fewer than eight goals.

Apex will next play North Mecklenburg in the semifinals on Saturday at 10 a.m. at Greensboro College. If they win, the Cougars will advance to the championship game later that day against the Green Hope-East Chapel Hill winner.

“It's kind of amazing,” Faulhaber said. “My brother played on the guys' team when they won [in 2005]. Now the chance to win my senior year is awesome. This is only our second year. I think it's just amazing.”

Apex fielded a girls' team as a club squad last year, and it is competing as a varsity team for the first time this year. Trombley has credited her players for their dedication and willingness to learn from the get-go for the program's early success.

Cook, on the other hand, said the credit goes to the coaching staff.

“I picked up my stick freshman year,” said Cook, now a junior. “I'd never heard of lacrosse. I'd never played lacrosse. I've learned everything from all the coaches around here. I think we owe everything to them. They're here for us, and they've taught us everything we know.”

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