



Men's Soccer Wins Region XVI Crown; Smugala Named Coach Of Year

It was well worth the wait for the STLCC-Meramec men's soccer team as they captured their first Region XVI championship since 2000 with a 2-1 win over Maple Woods Sunday (Nov. 1) in Kansas City. The Magic, now 16-3-1, advanced to the title game with a convincing 3-0 victory over Blue River in Friday's semi-finals.

"It's awesome," said head coach **Brian Smugala**. "I actually think the win represents anyone who's ever played for the program while I've been coaching. I've already got several calls and texts from kids who are former players that are really excited. I wish all of them could have experienced what the kids this year experienced."

Smugala was named the Region XVI Coach Of The Year and wasn't the only Magic member to take home honors. Sophomore forward **Almin Sabotic** (Mehlville) was named the Region XVI Player Of The Year and a first team All-Region selection. Sabotic proved the voters right, scoring both goals in the title game, the first one just nine minutes into the game to grab an important lead.

"It was a cross from the left side, **Jake (Macker)** played a long ball from the far post," said Sabotic. "I was just there at the right time, it was very exciting for me. I think the first goal was very important, it calmed us down the entire game, we had ball possession, we were moving the ball much more and they were chasing a lot more."

Sabotic's second goal came with ten minutes left in the first half when the Magic used the fast break to their advantage over Maple Woods. "It was a free kick; **Marc (Bowron)** played a long ball. I was one-on-one with the guy, it got over his head, the goalie came out. I just put my head in there, thank God it went in," said Sabotic.

Bowron (Aberdeen, Scotland), a defender, earned second team All-Region kudos for his determined play, like an assist to Sabotic on the second and game-winning goal. However, he had to dig deep in the final few minutes.

"In the second half they pressured us a lot," said Bowron. "We were on our back foot for maybe 20-25 minutes but I felt our boys battled for every inch of the ball. We just battled and battled and battled and came out with a victory and that's what our team's about."

Much of the battle was in the midfield where **Justin Billmeyer** (Gibault) and **Pat Swaney** (CBC) controlled play most of the game. Billmeyer won first team All-Region honors for his consistent quality play throughout the year. The sophomore, along with sophomore goalie **Chris Eason** (Lindbergh), had to prove his mettle after Maple Woods scored a disputed goal with nearly 22 minutes left in the game.

“After that I was just trying to come out and take as many opportunities to take the ball from the defense so they didn’t have to worry about it,” said Eason. “It ended up they didn’t really have any big chances and we ended up winning the game.”

Meramec now hosts the District Tournament on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 6-7. Laramie County, Wyoming will play a regional winner from Kansas on Friday, and the Magic will face the winner of that game on Saturday. The team that emerges will head to the NJCAA National Tournament Nov. 18-22 in Trenton, New Jersey. Optimism is not in short supply for this high-achieving squad.

“If we can get past this district round, anything can happen,” said Bowron. “The national championship’s there for the taking. It’s up to us if we battle and play as well as we’ve done this weekend we can win anything.”

Meramec To Battle Lewis and Clark At Edward Jones Dome Nov. 10

The STLCC-Meramec College men’s basketball team will battle the Lewis and Clark squad in an early season conference match up **Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 7:00** at the Edward Jones Dome in Downtown St. Louis. The game serves as a technical rehearsal for NCAA officials and CBS television personnel for next March when St. Louis plays host to a NCAA regional. Admission is free with open seating.

Meramec head coach **Randy Albrecht**, in his 33rd year at the helm, is looking to guide the Magic to their 25th straight winning season as he closes in on his 700th career victory. The team finished 23-9 a year ago and returns size and height, including 6’7” center **Dallis Johnson** (Lafayette High), an All-Conference and All-Region honoree as a freshman. Johnson averaged 11.5 points and 6 rebounds last year.

Also back is 6’4” power forward **John Alexander** (Oakville High) who sparkled off the bench last season, contributing over 6 points and 6 rebounds a game. Another sophomore forward with proven ability is 6’4” **Josh Dale** (Affton High). Dale added 8 points and 5 rebounds as a freshman two years ago, before red shirting last year. New to the mix is 6’6” forward **Alen Hadzimahovic** (Fox) who averaged a double-double as a prep senior - 20 points and 10 rebounds a game.

The guard position features point guard **Dietrick Sooter** who can drain the three point shot. As a prep senior earlier this year at Pierce City (MO) High he set a new MSHSAA record with 10 three’s in one half. He also recorded a 65 point night in sectional playoffs, fifth highest in MSHSAA history. **Dylan Briscoe**, a 6’2” guard, (Francis Howell Central) is also a three point threat - he sank 61 three’s for Howell Central last season while averaging 11 points a game.

Also in the Meramec mix is **Josh Kane**, a 6'2" guard from Howell North, who averaged 13 points a year ago. Guard **Eric Kimminau** enters at the top of his game - his prep Borgia High squad won a state championship in March. Kimminau is also a skilled three point shooter; hitting 65 three's as a senior at Borgia. He joins guards **Julian Gilliam** (Parkway South) and **Manny Crossland** (Wellston).

The Trailblazers are led by new head coach **Deon Thomas**, the career scoring leader for the University of Illinois. He succeeds longtime Trailblazer head coach Doug Stotler, who moved on to become Athletic Director at Jefferson College.

Magic Wrestlers Open Season At Lindenwood Open; 3 Place

The STLCC-Meramec wrestling team opened the season Oct. 30 in the Lindenwood Open. The mega-event not only featured wall-to-wall wrestling on six mats all day and evening, but hundreds of wrestlers from all levels of programs in the Midwest.

Placing and taking home medals were **Travis Hammons** (Hubbarb, IL) at 165 pounds with a fourth place finish, **Craig Chiles** (Hillsboro) with a fifth place medal at 133 pounds, and **Seth Horner** (Perry, Ohio) also with a fifth place finish at 149 pounds.

Meramec also boasts returning 2008 national champion **Deron Winn** (Liberty, MO) at 189 pounds, as well as local former prep stars **Nicholas Hoehn** (Framington), **Anthony James, Jr.** (Holt), **Lee Lindsay** (McCluer South), and **Jon Vogt** (Ste. Genevieve).

The Magic are led by interim head coach **Nick Vogt**, a two-time All-American with Meramec in 2002 and '03.

Women's Soccer Is Upset In Region XVI Semi-Final 1-0

The top-seeded STLCC-Meramec women's soccer team was upset in the semi-final game of the Region XVI Tournament Saturday, Oct. 31 by STLCC-Forest Park, 1-0. The Magic had defeated the Highlanders twice during the regular season.

However, bad luck factored into the loss. In the first 10 minutes of the game, sophomore captain **Casey Caldwell** (Lindbergh) suffered a knee injury and was forced to leave the game for the remainder of the evening. Caldwell is the team's leading scorer with 10 goals and 2 assists.

The game stayed scoreless until 17 minutes were left in the second half when a penalty kick foul was called against Meramec for a Forest Park player being taken down inside the goalie box. The Highlanders converted the PK for the game's only score.

Meramec finished the season at 7-6. Coach **Jeff Karl**, completing his 27th season, is the national women's soccer career wins leader with 326 victories.