



Townies just skating along

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PAWTUCKET -- East Providence failed to make the Met C playoffs last season, but nobody is calling the Townies pushovers this year.

In fact, some say that the Townies are downright invincible.

East Providence was winning games by an average of 7.23 goals, outscoring its opponents 94-13 entering last night's clash with Division III-South's top team, Middletown. And though the Islanders came in riding a nine-game win streak, East Providence made quick work of them by scoring three first-period goals en route to a 7-3 victory.

"We knew that Middletown was 11-2-1 coming in so we were really pumped up for this game and it showed," East Providence coach Gregg Amore said. "The only offensive effort that (the Islanders) really sustained was at the end. I was pleased today. Everybody said that they could really move the puck and score, and they have a good goaltender, but we outplayed them today. Our third line played really good."

The Division III-Central first-place Townies are 16-0-0 and just two wins away from finishing with a perfect season. Middletown coach Steve Saunders had high hopes of becoming the first team to beat East Providence, but the Townies proved to be too tough.

"We were looking forward to challenging them, but we didn't have our best game," said Saunders, whose team clinched the Division III-South title last week. Middletown is having its first winning season since joining the Interscholastic League for the 2002-03 season. "We know that if we want to win the state title, we'll have to go through them. This game just reinforced how hard we have to work. We have to be the hardest-working team out there to win."

Division III-Central points leader Louis Peterson added two goals and two assists yesterday to bring his totals to 17 goals and 34 assists for 51 points on the season while leading the Townies to victory.

Patrick Gormley, second on the points list (21 goals, 14 assists), added a goal and two assists. The Townies have scored 101 goals this season.

Goal number 95 came just 1:29 into the game when center Tyler Elmasian, on assists from Michael Cicerone and Ross Amaral, found the back of the net. Less than a minute later, Peterson made it 2-0, but Middletown would not go away easy.

Middletown center Richard Breen cut the Townies' lead in half with a goal from Thomas Welch and Shane Sullivan, but Jeffrey Fontes scored unassisted with 3:19 left in the first and gave East Providence a 3-1 cushion.

David Hill scored 4:47 into the second period, and Amaral put the game out of reach by beating Middletown goalie Kyle Hessler 1:52 into the third, which gave the Townies a 5-1 advantage.

Patrick Michaud scored two third-period goals for the Islanders, but it wasn't enough. Gormley and Peterson each had a third-period goal for East Providence.

"We will learn form this experience," Saunders said, adding that he hopes his team will learn enough to get to the state title series.

East Providence needs to beat West Warwick (6-8-2) tomorrow and Narragansett (6-10-1) on Saturday to finish the season with a perfect record.

"If we do what we are supposed to do, we should be OK," Amore said. "I wish the playoffs were right now. We are ready to play."

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