

Miami Herald

Posted on Wed, Apr. 13, 2005

WATER POLO ROUNDUP

Northeast routs defending champ

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When Northeast boys' water polo coach Loren Price was putting his team's schedule together in January, he wanted to make sure he ended the season with the toughest opponent possible and did that by scheduling defending state champion Miami Gulliver Prep for the regular-season finale.

After getting the opponent he wanted, Price more than got the result he wanted as the host Hurricanes routed the Raiders 19-9 on Tuesday night.

"We're very happy to play against the best competition that's out there," Price said. "The boys are really coming together and playing as a team. They're very fluid right now."

The Hurricanes wasted little time setting the tempo as Janson Wigo scored the opening goal just 30 seconds into the contest.

Ninety seconds later, Darren McKay gave Northeast an early 2-0 lead before he added another goal a little more than a minute later.

Gulliver finally got on the board with about 3:30 remaining in the first quarter, but instead of turning the tide in the Raiders' direction, the goal only seemed to spark Northeast as the Hurricanes added three more goals before the end of the quarter.

The Raiders made it a 6-2 game just before time ran out in the quarter.

GULLIVER'S ATTEMPT

Gulliver came out stronger in the second quarter as the Raiders scored two consecutive goals to open a period in which they matched Northeast with four goals each.

The third quarter saw the Raiders come within striking distance, trailing 11-8 at one point before the Hurricanes scored five unanswered goals. The game came to an end with three minutes left in the fourth once Northeast went up by 10.

"Northeast is definitely the team to beat in the state. Last time we played them a little bit better," Gulliver coach Alex Bennett said. "We were always chasing the lead, and you can't chase a lead against a team like Northeast."

For the Raiders (18-5), Brett Boith had four goals and two steals. Matthew Burke added two goals, and Tommy Lumpkin and Andy Herring scored one apiece.

WIGO'S 5 GOALS

Leading Northeast in the win was Drac Wigo, with five goals and seven assists. Janson Wigo added six goals and two assists, and Jorge Montero scored three.

With the victory, the Hurricanes close out the regular season a perfect 23-0. With the playoffs starting in two weeks, Price is certain that his team has what it takes to be the inaugural FHSAA state champion.

"We're very motivated, we're very happy," Price said. "The kids have been wanting it for years now."