

Bismarck Legacy advances to ND boys soccer state tournament championship for 1st time in program history

The Sabers fended off a furious Minot comeback in the second half Friday as the West Region champions stamped another milestone into their history book.



Bismarck Legacy goalkeeper Liam Horner (back center) eyes the ball as Minot's Dylan Helde (18) attempts to get a shot on goal during the North Dakota Boys State Soccer Tournament semifinals on Friday, Oct. 13, 2023 at the MDU Resources Community Bowl in Bismarck.

Tom Stromme/Bismarck Tribune

By [Ryan Spitza](#)

BISMARCK — The Bismarck Legacy boys soccer team played its first full varsity season in 2015.

The Sabers then qualified for the state tournament for the first time in 2020 and advanced to the state semifinals for the first time last season.

Fast forward to the present and the Sabers will play for a state championship for the first time after topping Minot 4-2 Friday in the North Dakota boys soccer state tournament semifinals at the MDU Resources Community Bowl.

"When you start a program ... the first year when you have ninth-graders only, ninth- and 10th-graders, there were times when I thought it's just not going to get there," said an emotional Tom Marcis, head coach of the Sabers. "For the last five or six years, every year it's gotten a little bit better and it's exciting to see us finally make it there."

The path to get there was by no means easy, even though it appeared like it was going to be with Legacy up 3-0 early in the second half.

Uriel Rivera's second goal of the tournament put the Sabers up 1-0 in the 35th minute. A mere 24 seconds into the second half, it was Legacy captain Kamden Kooiman notching his second on the weekend to make it 2-0 before teammate Isaac Schumacher tacked on another in the 46th minute.

The Magi refused to surrender, using an aggressive attack from that point on and throwing everything towards the Sabers' net.

Brayden Oswalt finally broke through for Minot in the 69th minute for his second of the tournament, and teammate Wayne Roberts netted another three minutes later to suddenly make it a one-goal game with 8:28 remaining in regulation.



Minot's Brayden Oswalt (19, center) turns upfield with the ball as Bismarck Legacy's Owan Joyce (6, left) and James Matthew Guenther (4, right) pursue during the North Dakota Boys State Soccer Tournament semifinals on Friday, Oct. 13, 2023 at the MDU Resources Community Bowl in Bismarck.

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The Magi ultimately ran out of steam and with Legacy gaining possession on the opposite end, Rivera added the dagger with six seconds remaining on a pass from Kooiman into the box for his second goal of the match.

"We knew three up was a good score, but we also knew that they weren't going to rest on that," Marcis said of Minot. "They weren't going to stop playing. We knew they were going to play hard to the end and fortunately we were able to outlast them 4-2 and we're excited about that."

Legacy, the top seed from the West Region, improved to 15-1-2 and will play in the state title match Saturday at 3:30 p.m. The Magi, the West No. 3 seed, fell to 11-2-6 and will play in the third-place game at 1:15 p.m.

Rivera's goal in the waning seconds gave him three for the weekend. It's one he could've passed on, but he wanted to make sure his team ended the match on a positive note after Minot had Legacy on its heels much of the second half.

"It was definitely very exciting," Rivera said. "To know that we closed the game out with a win and now we're heading to the finals."

Schumacher and Kooiman along with Reece Snow and Jayden Ridl added assists on Legacy's four goals.

Unofficial final shots were 19-18 in favor of Legacy. Sabers junior goalkeeper Liam Horner finished with five saves while Magi junior Grayden Wald recorded six.

Minot had 11 corner kick opportunities to Legacy's two. The Sabers were issued two yellow cards to the Magi's one.

Legacy finished third in last year's state tournament. While certainly another milestone in the program's journey, this year's West Region champions are striving for more.

"I'm really excited for the boys," Marcis said. "They've worked hard. When we took third place last year, that was awesome. We really celebrated, but they didn't want third this year. Their goal from the start was to make the state championship game and obviously win a state championship."

"From day one, the first day of practice, it was all about getting to the state final. They've made it, and now we'll see tomorrow."

Rivera said nerves will need to be at a minimum for the Sabers to put their best foot forward.

"Just play our game," Rivera said. "Play calm and let the rest happen."