

# Fargo Shanley edges Bismarck Legacy to win North Dakota state boys soccer title

Andrew Schneider's goal in the 60th minute Saturday gave the Deacons the North Dakota boys soccer state championship for the first time since 2008.



Fargo Shanley celebrates after winning the North Dakota Boys State Soccer Tournament championship on Saturday, Oct. 14, 2023 at the MDU Resources Community Bowl in Bismarck.

Tom Stromme/Bismarck Tribune

By [Ryan Spitza](#)

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BISMARCK — Fargo Shanley coach Ryan Christianson said Friday it was going to take more than one goal to win the North Dakota boys soccer state tournament championship game.

He was right. Following two 1-0 results to advance to Saturday's state title bout against Bismarck Legacy, the Deacons found themselves in a 1-1 deadlock with the Sabers midway through the second half.

Fortunately for Shanley, the one-goal trend didn't stick, as the Deacons found the go-ahead tally in the 60th minute that ultimately secured a 2-1 victory and their second state championship in program history in a match played at the MDU Resources Community Bowl.

On a team laden with seniors, it was a sophomore who turned out to be the hero for Shanley. The game-winner was off the head of Andrew Schneider, who slipped a ball past Legacy goalkeeper Liam Horner on a free kick sent in by senior teammate and captain Peter Noah from 53 yards.

"I saw the ball coming and I heard the keeper yell that he had it," Schneider said of the winning play. "I knew he was going to be there, so I just went for it and knew I had to get a flick on it if it was going to go in. I looked back and it was in the net. It felt surreal."

Previously, Shanley's lone state title in boys soccer came in 2008. Fifteen years later, the Deacons will need to make room in the trophy case.

"It hasn't really sunk in yet I don't think," Shanley head coach Ryan Christianson said. "This is my fourth one with the boys and we finally got one. Especially with this special group of seniors.



Fargo Shanley's Andrew Kankelfritz (12, right) and Bismarck Legacy's Nathaniel Olheiser (22, left) fight for control of the ball during the North Dakota Boys State Soccer

Tournament championship game on Saturday, Oct. 14, 2023 at the MDU Resources Community Bowl in Bismarck.

Tom Stromme/Bismarck Tribune

"It's a special moment. Not just for me, but for my coaching staff and for the program."

The Deacons couldn't have done it without senior goalkeeper Matt Berg, who unofficially set aside six Legacy shots — only surrendering a penalty kick to the Sabers' Reece Snow in the 50th minute which tied the match at one.

Perhaps the most crucial moment of the match came with just over seven minutes remaining in regulation. Searching for the equalizer, Legacy's Uriel Rivera — who already had three goals on the weekend — stepped up from the middle of the pitch and booted a hard strike on net that Berg leaped up to save and keep Shanley in the lead.

"It was a big save," Berg said. "I was just relying heavily on my muscle memory and just getting to the ball confidently and just making sure I got a firm hand on that ball. That's just what I focused on."

Snow's penalty kick was the only goal Berg allowed in the tournament.

"It's not really something I can control, just be better next time," Berg said. "It was just we can't dwell on it, we've got to get back. It's the championship game, we've got to get back, just score another one."

Score another, they did. The Deacons showed no signs of folding after the penalty kick, shifting momentum back in their direction quickly with a flurry of quality scoring chances at the other end.

"Our guys, I told them the biggest thing was to keep your heads, stay focused and we'll get through it," Christianson said.

Shanley struck first in the 33rd minute when senior captain Andrew Kankelfritz scored on a free kick from 24 yards that was sent through cleanly, beating Horner to his right.

The score remained 1-0 through halftime until Snow's penalty kick drew the Sabers even.

Final unofficial shots totals were 20-12 in favor of Shanley. Horner finished with eight saves for the Sabers.

Six yellow cards were issued in what was a physical match — four on the Deacons and two on the Sabers.

Shanley, the top seed out of the East Region, capped its state championship run at 16-1-2. Legacy, the top seed out of the West, finished 15-2-2.

"It feels great," Berg said. "I have a little experience from (winning a state title last year) because of football, and it kind of just carries over but it never gets old. It's awesome."

"It feels surreal," Schneider added. "It's a great feeling."

Berg, Noah and senior midfielders London Gray and Michael Noack were all-tournament selections for the Deacons. Rivera, junior midfielder Kamden Kooiman and senior defender Nathaniel Olheiser were all-tournament picks for the Sabers.

Elsewhere in the East Region, Fargo Davies senior midfielder Rick Peng and junior forward Leon Hidanovic were named to the all-tournament team.

Minot senior midfielder Brayden Oswalt was named boys soccer Senior Athlete of the Year as voted on by the North Dakota High School Coaches Association. Jamestown head coach Brandi Harti was selected as boys soccer Coach of the Year.

Minot won the third-place match over Jamestown 3-2 while Davies topped Bismarck 4-1 in the fifth-place game.