

## **Late first-half goal gives Bismarck Legacy momentum it needs to top Shanley in boys state soccer semifinals**

Freshman midfielder Uriel Rivera struck with 8 seconds remaining in the first half to give the Sabers a 2-1 lead going into the final 40 minutes

By Ryan Spitz

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WEST FARGO — Fargo Shanley wasn't the opponent Bismarck Legacy originally expected to see in the quarterfinals at this week's North Dakota boys soccer state tournament.

It apparently didn't matter, as the West No. 2 seed Sabers topped the East No. 3 Deacons 4-1 to advance to Friday's 4:30 p.m. semifinal game against East No. 1 and defending state champion Fargo Davies at West Fargo High School.

Sophomore midfielder Kamden Kooiman scored two goals for Legacy (13-4-0), while freshman midfielder Uriel Rivera scored with eight seconds remaining in the first half to give the Sabers the lead for good and help punch their ticket to the state semifinals for the first time in school history.

Head coach Tom Marcis said Rivera's goal was the turning point in the contest.

"Obviously, that changed the whole momentum," Marcis said. "We kind of lost our way there a little bit in the middle of the (first) half and so that really kind of put us back into playing our game and obviously you saw that as we came out in the second half."

As for Shanley, you won't often hear coaches say they're just happy to be there. But under the circumstances that transpired earlier this week which saw the Deacons take the place of West Fargo Sheyenne, that was exactly the case.

"It's kind of a gift," said Shanley head coach Ryan Christianson. "We've been having bad luck all year and then they say, 'Hey, you're in the

tournament' and we only have two days to get ready. Only having two practices kind of showed our result (today)."

Christianson said giving up the go-ahead goal with just eight seconds remaining in the first half was a killer.

"I know some of my boys are pretty upset about it," Christianson said. "When you give up any goal before halftime, it's huge. Especially in the state tournament."

Shanley (7-6-2) will face West No. 4 seed Bismarck Century (9-7-2) in the consolation bracket at noon Friday. The Patriots fell to Davies (15-0-1) in the quarterfinals Thursday.

The Sabers drew first blood just 4 minutes, 39 seconds into the match when junior midfielder Ben McDonald beat Shanley senior goalkeeper Ryan Russell in a foot race to the ball and shot it past Russell into the empty net to give Legacy an early 1-0 lead.

Shanley tied the game at the 17:34 mark on a strike from junior midfielder Nathan Andrews.

That was all the Deacons wrote, as Rivera's goal gave Legacy the 2-1 lead at the half before Kooiman added his pair of second half goals to seal it.

Marcis said his team will be prepared to face a challenging Davies team Friday.