Catonsville boys soccer beats Franklin, 4-1, for 4th region title

The Comets scored 3 goals in roughly 3 minutes to advance to the Class 3A state quarterfinals



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A week after watching its hopes of a Baltimore County championship slip away, Catonsville boys soccer wasn't about to let another title get away.

Catonsville scored three goals in roughly three minutes in the first half, overwhelming host Franklin in a 4-1 victory in the Class 3A North II regional final. The win secured the fourth regional championship in program history and sent the Comets into the state quarterfinals.

"We did exactly what we wanted to do out the gate, and then we did it again, and we kept it coming," Catonsville coach Brendan Kennedy said. "We knew they attacked really well, and we wanted to make sure we locked that down defensively."

Catonsville (12-2-1) wasted little time taking control.

Junior Tristan Titcomb opened the scoring with 26:46 remaining in the first half, heading home the Comets' first goal. Senior Dominic Brown doubled the lead roughly a minute later, curling a corner kick directly into the net.

Two minutes later, Brown broke free on a one-on-one opportunity and buried his second goal, leaving Franklin (12-2) scrambling.

"We knew they were going to come out with intensity," Brown said. "So we had to get on the scoreboard early."

Franklin junior Edgar Fajardo answered with approximately 10 minutes remaining in the half, but the Indians got no closer. Five minutes into the second half, junior Finn Tracht converted a penalty kick to extend Catonsville's lead to 4-1.

His celebration proved a little too enthusiastic.

Tracht kicked down the corner flag, earning a yellow card. Even he couldn't argue with the referee's decision.

"I wasn't thinking for the celebration," Tracht said. "I deserved the yellow card."

A week earlier, Catonsville couldn't find the back of the net against Hereford, falling 1-0 on an own goal in the Baltimore County championship. The Bulls have handed the Comets both of their losses this season.

"We got away from our identity a bit," Kennedy said. "So learn from it, move forward, and then do what we did tonight."

Catonsville now hopes to replicate its unlikely postseason run in 2024, when the Comets entered the playoffs with a losing record before advancing to the state semifinals. Just three players from that team remain.

Tracht watched that run from the junior varsity team. Now, he has a regional championship of his own.

"Anything can happen in playoffs," he said. "We didn't want to have a good season and then drop bad in playoffs."

Brown has even bigger ambitions for his final high school season.

"I'm hungry," he said. "I want a state final. I want a state chip."

Have a news tip? Contact Michael Howes at mhowes@baltsun.com, 410-332-6200 and x.com/Mikephowes.

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