

Girls Prep•Private Review

Deerfield Has Last Say; Earns D-I Title With 1-0 Win

By Gary Demopoulos • HNIB News

The athletic teams at Deerfield Academy are known as the Big Green. However, at least for this year anyway, you could get away with calling the womens hockey team the Avengers.

You can also call them New England Division I girls prep champions.

Senior co-captain Katie Guay scored on a breakway at 10:18 of the first period, and the Big Green made that tally stand up, holding on for a 1-0 win over Hotchkiss to claim the New England Division I title at the Icecenter in Salem, NH.

Sixth-seeded Deerfield's march through the playoffs also included a 4-3 overtime win over Milton Academy, and a 1-0 semifinal conquest of previously-unbeaten Berkshire, Milton, Berkshire and Hotchkiss all defeated Deerfield during the regular season.

Hence, the Avengers.

"Well, they say revenge is sweet," said Deerfield coach Bill Cumming. "In our talk to the girls before the game, we spoke about how we had beaten Milton and Berkshire, two teams that we had



DEERFIELD ACADEMY is the new Girls Prep Division I New England champions after downing Hotchkiss, 1-0.

lost to, and how it really would be something to keep it going against Hotchkiss."

The two teams had played just two weeks prior, with the Bearcats emerging victorious in overtime, 3-2.

"You have to credit Deerfield, they played a great game," said Hotchkiss coach John Cooper. "Our girls played hard. Down the stretch they won seven one-goal games (including five in a row before the final). Their goalie, (Emily) Vitt was on today."

Vitt, a sophomore from Illinois, was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player after blanking both Berkshire and Hotchkiss. She made some good saves to keep Hotchkiss at bay, including two in the final minute on Bearcats' superstar Alana BreMiller. This marked her 12th shutout of the season.

The only goal of the game came after a faceoff just inside the Deerfield zone. On a set play, Guay takes off down the left wing side. She collected a long pass, outtraced a Hotchkiss defenseman, cut in and put the puck between the legs of Bearcats goaltender Stephanie Cochran. Kat Sweet and Elizabeth Rosenberger drew assists on the play.

"We knew all of their top players, but we told the girls to just play our game," Cumming said. "We wanted to forecheck like mad. We rotated six defensemen throughout the game. Katie (Guay) and Kat (Sweet) were the best captains I've ever had here. They made sure the girls played together as a team."

The tourney win marked one of the most competitive years ever in Girls Division I prep hockey. All eight teams that qualified could have won it.

"Three weeks ago, there were probably 12 teams that could have won it," said Cooper. "This game epitomizes how far girls hockey has come. I take a lot of pride that there were two Western New England teams in the final."

Girls Prep Division I Tourney Scoreboard

Quarterfinals

Deerfield 4, Milton Acad. 3 (OT)

Nobles 5, Lawrence Acad. 1

Hotchkiss 4, Cushing 3

Berkshire 6, Choate 1

Semifinals

Deerfield 1, Berkshire 0

Hotchkiss 3, Nobles 2

Final

Deerfield 1, Hotchkiss 0

HNIB DIVISION I GIRLS PREP Top Ten Poll

TEAM	W	L	T
1. Deerfield	20	5	1
2. Hotchkiss	16	4	2
3. Berkshire	22	1	3
4. Nobles	22	1	0
5. Milton	19	2	1
6. Cushing	17	7	1
7. Choate	14	6	3
8. Lawrence Acad.	14	8	2
9. Taft	12	6	3
10. Phillips Exeter	13	10	2

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The Bearcats were able to pull Cochran for a sixth skater with 1:10 to play. Hotchkiss had the puck in the Deerfield zone most of that remaining time. The Deerfield faithful couldn't breathe a sigh of relief until Guay was able to clear the puck out of the zone with 10 seconds to play.



HOTCHKISS DEFENSESMAN Shannon Tarrant (3) battles for puck with Deerfield's Lindsey Bazzone (11) to right of goalie Stephanie Cochran.