

The LCA Lady Eagles returned to the pitch after an outstanding All "A" State tournament run that saw three complete game shutouts and a runner-up finish on penalties to the St. Henry Crusaders, to face cross town rival Catholic. Catholic has often gotten the better of this rivalry but the LCA Lady Eagles took the game that mattered last year in the Regional final and made the most of it with an outstanding runner up finish in the KHSAA State tournament. I'm sure these events weren't lost on Catholic as Lexington's two non-secular "private schools" squared off for the first time since. Despite a one-day turn around after the long weekend, the Lady Eagles were ready to play and played very well.

Throughout the first half, play was generally even with both teams defending well and creating scoring opportunities. Early in the second, Kennedy Caneer was left unaccounted for moving forward out of her newly acquired outside back position. As she has done countless times since the move by Coach Fugmann, Kennedy found midfield and a little more and sent a softly struck ball forty yards through the air and into the box. The ever present and ever energized Maddie Sjogren put herself on the tail end of the cross and headed the ball into the upper right corner for the first goal of the match. An ever inquisitive announcer suggested that the goal during the run of play against rival Catholic was a rare feat. Indeed, since 2000, that was just the fifth goal LCA has scored on the Lady Knights ('01, '07, '09 and '10 District Final).

With LCA up 1-0 and a significant amount of time left on the clock, Catholic's players stepped on the gas and upstart freshman Monica Rios was inserted into the game up top. Although a freshman, Rios plays like many of LCA's freshman, i.e., undaunted by the high school spectacle. Despite Catholic's efforts LCA continued to create chances as did the Lady Knights. With about fifteen minutes remaining in the game, MB Gorham broke in on the near side and was met just outside the corner of the box by Caroline Hargis. Unfortunately for Hargis, she got the short end of the 'stick' and had to leave the game having jammed a hip and having the wind knocked out of her. Hargis returned to the game minutes later after Alex Stanback filled in admirably, but she was rudely welcomed back by the side official who refused to grant her rare request for an offside flag. Monica Rios received a ball on the far side of the field with several LCA defenders looking for a flag and had just enough time to cross the ball to an opportunistic MB Gorham who touched the ball into the net for the equalizer.

Although somewhat deflated, the Lady Eagles continued to battle throughout regulation and the two five minute golden goal overtime periods. Neither team was able to capitalize in the overtime periods but both teams had opportunities. With neither team capitalizing, it was back to the now all too familiar penalty kick shoot out to resolve beautifully contested district games. Despite PKs by Bertrand (beautiful drive upper left corner) and Hargis (laser down the middle), the Lady Knights found just enough to edge LCA 3-2 on a stake to the heart by Kelsey Johnson.

While the outcome was of the non-desirable type, there were many positives to take away from the game including the willingness of the young LCA Lady Eagles to compete at a high level for an entire 90 minutes regardless of opponent or circumstances. In addition, the Lady Eagles received a surprise note from the center ref extolling the virtues of the team, coach and program. Center official, Darryl Gregory, noted "how impressed [he] was with the behavior and respect the girls team showed towards the officials and the game as a whole." He supported this assertion by noting that "each and every girl on the LCA team said thank you when they received the ball to take their shots for the shoot out" and "[a]t the conclusion of the game Coach Fugmann, in spite of not being victorious in the contest, came up and complimented, we the officials on a well refereed game." These actions are most certainly a positive and one of the many things to love about the LCA women's soccer program and Coach Fugmann. Well done by all.