

## Bonnies Win Way Into Sweet 16

Written by Pat Clifton

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St. Bonaventure punched its ticket to the DI-AA National playoffs Saturday, beating Rutgers 67-11 to win the Empire Conference's automatic bid to the postseason. The Bonnies end their fall season 7-2-1 and tied in the league standings with Brockport, but win the head-to-head tiebreaker having beaten Brockport 29-19 in September.

St. Bonaventure knew it had to beat Brockport and score four tries to qualify for the playoffs, but didn't let obsession over the end-goal cloud the process.

"Honestly, we took the exact opposite approach," said St. Bonaventure captain Kevin McCorry. "We really stressed all week that it was our last game of the season. We wanted to be technically sound in our rucks, our tackling and our ball presentation, and most importantly we wanted to have fun. We had a good week of practice, morale was up and we came out and just executed on Saturday."

The Bonnies executed nearly flawlessly, running in 11 tries to Rutgers' one. Scrumhalf Charles

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Meagher scored a hat trick, Jordan Farrant, Alex Brussard and John Sullivan scored two-a-piece and Tim Hanna and Justin Walker dotted down one each.

“We were just clicking the whole day,” said McCorry. “We had a lot of penalties, which are mental mistakes, but we were passing the ball well, we were running, we were supporting each other very well. Everything just flowed. We stuck to the game plan, we executed and the score board showed the results of our hard work.”

This season is St. Bonaventure’s fourth in DI, so the current senior class of McCorry, Hanna, Brussard and Jonathan Garbin is the first to have played all its rugby for SBU in DI.

“It means the world to me – the chance to play with literally my four best friends,” said McCorry. “To play again with them in the spring for something significant, just having that three extra months of rugby where the blood, sweat and tears can carry on makes it a little more special, a little more intense.”

Elsewhere in the Empire this weekend, Stony Brook went 1-1, beating Fordham 42-27 and losing to Iona 43-36 to close out conference play. The results leave Fordham (0-10) in last place and Stony Brook (6-4) just ahead of Iona (5-4-1).