

Top Seeds Win in CR4

Written by Alex Goff
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The top seeds won their playoff matches in the Competitive Region 4 men's DI club Round of 32 Saturday, with Norfolk, PAC, Mystic River and Boston Irish Wolfhounds all emerging victorious.

Norfolk looked the most dominant, running in a 79-10 score over Long Island. Outside center Anthony Kowalski scored three tries for the Blues while flanker Kevin Mott slotted seven conversions and a penalty for 17 points.

Meanwhile Mystic River defeated a determined NOVA side 27-17. NOVA pulled the game level at 17-17 late before two tries put the game away for the Boston club.

"We have mixed feelings about the performance," said Mystic captain Jamie Green. "We won, but we had too many penalties and missed tackles. If we want to go further in the playoffs we need to cut out those errors."

Green said NOVA played well, especially for a team on the road in playoff rugby, but his squad put it together when it counted.

"We kind of looked each other in the eye and realized we needed to play better," said Green.

PAC defeated New York 27-13 in another game where the momentum ebbed and flowed. PAC ran in two tries and a penalty in the first half and seemed in control at 17-3. But a yellow card and some poor decisions allowed New York back into it.

"We had about a ten-minute dip," said captain and prop Brian Olmes. "We've been doing this in games, where we have a great first half and then we've got it won. We haven't quite figured out

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that you have to go into that second half hard-core to just put the game away. We didn't do that."

In the final 15 minutes PAC got back on track and scored twice to win, but Olmes said the feeling was his team has to be better going forward.

And finally Boston Irish Wolfhounds won 33-22 over Raleigh. Head Coach David Gonzales, who had flown in from Buffalo (where he is coaching Harvard in the DI college playoffs) was less than overjoyed with the performance. His squad led 22-3 and felt they were dominating the set piece. And yet Raleigh rallied and almost won.

"This was our best test because we haven't had any real league games leading into this," said Gonzales. "I was not happy with the performance at all. But it did expose the things we need to work on."

Gonzales's comments about league games were echoed by others. The split of the league, with playoffs coming in the New Year, has meant teams prepare by playing friendlies. And friendlies aren't the same as league games. That led to some rusty play. Still and all, teams such as Raleigh and NOVA might have been closer because they had one or two league games this spring, but they still didn't win.

Norfolk 79-10 Long Island
PAC 27-13 New York
Boston Irish Wolfhounds 33-22 Raleigh
Mystic River 27-17 NOVA