Written by Rob Gavin
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(Michelle Gavin photo)

Two high-powered, nationally-ranked high school clubs battled for bragging rights in the Kansas City Metro on April 16th. The St. Thomas Aquinas Saints defeated the Kansas City Junior Blues 25-10 on Senior Day at STA Stadium. This was the third time the two squads have met this season in a clash for local rugby dominance.

The Saints took the first meeting 24-12 to win the championship match at the Green Country Showdown in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Blues bounced back the following week to defeat the Saints 20-12. This week's rubber match, played in front of several hundred spectators, did not disappoint. The first half was a hard-hitting defensive struggle with both teams converting just one penalty kick, going to intermission tied 3-3.

The first 20 minutes of the second half were as hard fought as the first 35. The Saints turned up the pressure, scoring 10 unanswered points. The Junior Blues then caught the Saints retreating on a penalty from 10 meters out to score their only try and conversion (13 to 10). Aquinas responded by scoring two late tries and a conversion with some superior back line movement

and open field running to take the match.

No quarter was given by either side on the pitch, as this cross-town competition looks to become one of the great high school rivalries in the country. Both clubs will represent the Heart of America RFU in the Western RFU Championships in Austin, Texas later this month. The Saints will compete as a single high school club and the Junior Blues in the U19 division.