

GORC stands out in crowd of Anne Arundel champs

By SEAN BURNS, Staff Writer

Heading south on I-97 yesterday morning, motorists were greeted by a somewhat cryptic sign. Written with cups popped into the gaps in a chain-link fence on an overpass just before Exit 5 was the phrase "Go GORC 160's!", adorned with numerous American flags.

To the casual observer, it may have proved impossible to understand, but for the estimated 5,500 fans that passed through Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium, it meant one thing: it was championship day for the Anne Arundel Youth Football Association.

That 160-pound squad was one of three from the Gambrills-Odenton Recreation Council that took home county titles, as it took the 95- and 105-pound titles in addition to the 160 win. Couple those titles with the GORC victory in 65 pounds last weekend, and the council took home four of the eight county titles for the second straight year.

"A lot of that drive comes from our commissioner, Dwain Jones," said coach Clifton Luber of the 105-pound champs. "It's a year-round job for him, but he really keeps us on the same page organization-wise, and it keeps us heading in the right direction."

The only other organization to win more than one game on the day was Severn, which won the 75 and 85-pound titles to start the day off. The other champions were the Anne Arundel County Rebels at 120-pounds and the Pasadena Chargers at 135. All of the champions, save the 160-Pound team, move on to play next week for a chance to play for a state championship, facing off with team's from Carroll, Howard and Harford Counties next week, with the finals to be played at Raven's Stadium next Saturday.

"It's going to be tough, because we'll have to play three games in seven days," said Chargers 135-pound coach Brian Baublitz. "But we've been practicing since July, so we're happy to keep it going."

Playing this year's championship games at Navy's home field turned out to be a big hit for both players and fans, as the superior quality of the field as well as the big-time atmosphere was a big draw.

"We're definitely going to come back if we get a chance," said AAYFA President Rick Peacock, who also coached the 95-pound GORC team. "This is all about the kids, and it's such an experience for them to be here."

As for his maiden voyage as the league's president, Peacock couldn't be happier about how things turned out on its marquee day.

"Everything just went exceptionally well," he said. "We had so much support from the parents and fans, it couldn't help but come off perfectly with so many people involved."

In addition to crowning champions, Saturday marked an honor for one of the area's highly regarded referees, as Bob Bush had the Champion Officials Group's Official of the Year award named after him.

"It's been an honor and a privilege to work with the people from this county for 35 years," said Bush, who was clearly surprised by the honor. "Somewhere along the line, I did it right to have this happen."

Bush, the dean of referees for both football and lacrosse in the county, also wished to thank his wife, Nancy for being so 'understanding' about his longtime passion for officiating.

75 POUNDS: Severn's Nazarie Biscoe scored a pair of touchdowns as the Seminoles topped Pasadena 12-6 in overtime to open the day.

David Maracco II scored the only touchdown for the Chargers on a counter to the right for 19 yards in the second half.

After Severn scored to open overtime, the Chargers have made three first-downs in their attempt to tie the game back up, but Severn defender Hugh Whittaker stopped Maracco near the goal-line to secure the final score.

“They’ve been giving 110 percent on and off the field since July 15th,” Seminoles head coach Jayson Thorton said, “I’m very proud of the little guys.”

85 POUNDS: For the second straight year, the Severn topped Chesapeake by a touchdown in the league finals, this time by a 13-7 score.

Both Severn touchdowns came on passes from Beau English to Pierre Johnson, with Chesapeake scoring between those plays on a sweep by quarterback Zachary Smith.

Head coach Stephen Willertz of the Seminoles was happy with the play of his offense. “The offensive line blocked very well, and our running backs ran very hard today,” Severn coach Steve Willertz said. “English had two great passes to Johnson, and the line gave him enough time to throw.”

Willertz also gave credit to a tough Chesapeake defense. “They made us earn every yard,” he said.

Chesapeake’s head coach, Tim Goodrich, was disappointed at another one touchdown loss to Severn, but vowed to “be back next season.”

95 POUNDS: GORC won its first of three games on the day, opening the scoring early on a 47-yard run by Devin Salisbury. It was just the beginning for the Wildcats, who topped the Buccaneers by a 31-7 margin.

Salisbury added two more touchdowns while Syeed Mahdi had a 34-yard score and Diondre Wallace intercepted a pass from the Bucs’ Zachary Scott and returned it for a touchdown.

Despite the score, the Buccaneers played hard up to the final whistle, with Zack Abey scoring on a two-yard run with three minutes left in the game, a fact which was not lost on GORC coach Rick Peacock.

“Those Bucs are a great team, and were definitely a handful of us, regardless of the score.”

105 POUNDS: Coach Clifton Luber’s GORC squad won its fifth-straight county championship, improving its record to 64-1-1 as a unit with a 14-0 win over Cape St. Claire.



Dave’on Waters broke a 50-yard touchdown run in the second quarter to give the Wildcats the early lead, but much of the game was a hard-fought field position battle. Evan Jones capped a lengthy drive with 3:55 with a 14-yard touchdown run to ice the game.

“This team overcame a lot of adversity, suffering its first loss early in the season,” Luber said. “I’m thrilled to see how the kids bounced back and kept going to make it this far.”

Cape coach Mike Coyle was happy for his team’s season, despite the loss in the final. “No one thought we would get this far,” he said. “It was great that these kids got to play in the stadium.”

120 POUNDS: Running back Keyson Barnes was all over the field for the Anne Arundel County Rebels, two rushing touchdowns, recovering two fumbles and intercepting a pass for another touchdown in the game as his team won, 33-0 over Severn.

The win was the second straight title for the Rebels, who hadn't won one in the previous 19 years.

Co-captain LeVar Cooper and Josh Dolle also scored for the Rebels, who improved to 24-0 over the past two seasons.

"This is a special group of kids," said Rebels coach Don Hall, Jr., who said he is moving down to take over an 85-pound squad next season. "They make it tough to walk away, but there are some great coaches on this staff to take over."

135 POUNDS: The Pasadena double-wing offense held the ball for all but six plays of the first half, helping the Chargers run out to a 14-0 lead that wound up being the final score over South River.

Devonte Trusty opened the scoring with 3:31 remaining in the second quarter on a run up the middle, but the true back-breaker was a 48-yard touchdown run with 40 seconds remaining before the half.

"That's the second straight game we've done that," said Pasadena coach Brian Baublitz, whose team won after losing to GORC in the finals last season. "We're a smash-mouth team, so once we got that lead, you could see the looks on the kids' faces, knowing that we could finish it off."

160 POUNDS: The last game of the day was also the most exciting, as GORC survived a late scare from Cape St. Claire to win, 16-6.

The Wildcats were up 8-0 after an early 1-yard touchdown sneak by quarterback Josiah McPeak, who converted the conversion kick. Things stayed that way until late in the game before Cape, which had come back to top GORC in the fourth quarter in its regular-season meeting, recovered a fumble with just over four minutes left on the Wildcats' 37 yard-line. DeSean Johnson scored a 6-yard touchdown four plays later to bring the game to 8-6, but the Wildcats were able to block the PAT try to hold the lead, and recovered the onside kick attempt.

For icing on the win, McPeak ran for a 51-yard score and again knocked home the extra point for the final margin.

"When they started driving, we got that deja vu feeling," said GORC coach Brian Bayne, whose team finished at 9-3. "Cape played a heck of a game to almost come back again like they did."

Cape finished the season with an 8-4 mark.

Tom Tereschinski contributed to this article.