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## Carrell's goal helps Saints fend off Vikings, reach finals

By RICK JAKACKI  
Times Herald

St. Clair defenseman Drew Carrell admitted he wasn't looking for the Marysville hockey team to give his Saints much of a challenge Friday.

The Vikings, however, gave Carrell and the Saints all they could handle before falling, 4-2, in Division II semifinals action of the Larry Manz Thanksgiving Tournament at McMorran Arena.

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"For sure," Carrell said when asked if he was surprised by Marysville's performance. "I was expecting them to come out a little slow, but they came out (and played) really well."

The Saints (2-0) advance to the tournament finals at 11 a.m. today when they'll play Dakota, which beat Anchor Bay in the other semifinal, 5-1.

The title game was pushed up from its scheduled 1 p.m. start because the Dakota football team is playing in the Division 1 state finals at Ford Field. The consolation game between Anchor Bay and Marysville will start at 1 p.m.

Carrell, a senior, provided the heroics for the Saints, breaking a 2-2 tie with a goal at the 10-minute, 50-second mark of the third period. He walked in untouched from the right point and snapped a shot from the circle that beat goaltender Josh Kelly.

Will Hunter secured the win with a goal 30 seconds later.

 Zoom Photo


By MARK R. RUMMEL, Times Herald

**MAKING HIS MOVE:** St. Clair's Blake Frantz skates up the ice Friday as Marysville's Cody Gilbert follows during the Larry Manz Thanksgiving Tournament in McMorran Arena.

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"Drew played a great game," Saints Coach Scott Nichols said. "He was solid on defense and is a good offensive defenseman.

"He made a couple of nice moves and shot the puck stick-side low (for his goal). We've been telling the kids to do that for years."

Said Carrell: "You've got to take shots, and you get lucky once in a while."

Joe Lanzi and Blake Frantz each added a goal; Hunter, Carrell and Charlie Cronenworth each was credited with an assist. Rocco Benvenuti was the winning goaltender, stopping 15 shots.

Henry Zandarski and Erik Figge scored for the Vikings (1-1), with Christopher Barnes and Pat Bartlett each earning an assist. Kelly was busy in net, making 36 saves.

"Josh played well," Vikings Coach Paul Moretz said. "We gave all three goalies a shot (to start), and Josh looked really good in practice, and he gave us a chance to win in the end."

The game didn't look like it would be close as the Saints dominated early. They led 2-0 after one period, in which they held a 14-3 edge in shots.

The Vikings, however, answered with their best period and cut the deficit to 2-1, heading into the third. Figge then netted the equalizer at the 4:09 mark when he buried a loose rebound in the crease.

Carrell netted the game-winner about six minutes later.

"We played well in the first and third periods," Nichols said. "In the second, it was 2-0 and we didn't play with a sense of urgency. We were just playing to protect a 2-0 lead, and you can't play that way - not in the second period."

Said Moretz: "St. Clair's extremely fast. I'm proud of how hard our guys worked and how disciplined they played."

The Saints extended their unbeaten streak against the Vikings to eight games (7-0-1), dating back to 2005.

Carrell, who has played in each of those games, acknowledged beating the Saints' top rival is special.

TOURNAMENT WATCH
<b>FRIDAY</b>
<b>At McMorran Arena</b>
<b>Division 2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dakota 5, Anchor Bay 1</li> <li>St. Clair 4, Marysville 2</li> </ul>
<b>Division 1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wyandotte 9, Utica 1</li> <li>PH Northern 9, Port Huron 0</li> </ul>
<b>TODAY</b>
<b>Division 2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dakota vs. St. Clair, 11 a.m.</li> <li>Anchor Bay vs. Marysville, 1 p.m.</li> </ul>
<b>Division 1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Port Huron vs. Utica, 3 p.m.</li> <li>PH Northern vs. Wyandotte, 5 p.m.</li> </ul>
<b>NOTE:</b> Cost per day is \$4.50 per adult, \$3 for children 12 and under, and free for children under 2.

Zoom Photo

"(It means a lot because) it's them and we're St. Clair," Carrell said. "You always want to beat Marysville."

## DAKOTA 5 ANCHOR BAY 1

The Tars (0-2) fell behind 3-0 after one period and never recovered.

"We had a carbon copy of our first game against Utica," Tars Coach Daryel McCarrel said, referring to the 4-2 loss in which the Tars trailed 4-0 in the second period. "We were watching the game and we had our opportunities ... but we're not finishing. Whereas every time they shot, they were crashing the net and getting rebounds. We weren't doing that."

Michael Wyszczelski scored for the Tars early in the third period.

A.J. Gaglio started in net for the Tars and stopped 12 of 17 shots; Jeremy Wierzbowski relieved late in the second period and made four saves.

"We're a young team and we've just got to grow into playing 45 minutes," McCarrel said. "It's a little disappointing to dig ourselves into a hole before we start competing."

**Contact Rick Jakacki at (810) 989-6266 or [rjakacki@gannett.com](mailto:rjakacki@gannett.com).**



Drew Carrell

**STORYCHAT** 

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