



# Sterling Heights Stevenson boys hockey knock out Troy Athens, move to Regional final

By Detroit High School Sports Examiner, Daniel Tallant



Sterling Heights Stevenson has found itself in the same situation for three years. The Titans have met up with Troy Athens in a pre-regional final game every year since 2008.

The Red Hawks have managed to escape with wins in the teams first two meetings, but Stevenson controlled play on Thursday night and ended Athens' season by beating them, 3-2.

"I thought we played excellent tonight," Stevenson head coach Alan Korolewicz said. "It was one of our best performances of the season."

After allowing the Red Hawks to tie the game with just over five minutes left in the second period, the Titans responded quickly and scored twice before the period ended to take a 3-1 lead.

Athens scored late in the third period when senior Matt Lining hit fellow senior Steve Perkins in the slot and Perkins beat the goalie with a snap-shot. However, the Red Hawks could not produce a game-tying goal.

"We made a few key mistakes early and they capitalized," Athens head coach Joe Barone said. "We put all the pressure on the seniors. We are a team that wanted to fight to the end and they showed it."

Stevenson jumped on the scoreboard early when senior Taylor Weiss beat the Athens goaltender with a slap-shot from the top of

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the circles.

It was Lining who scored Athens' first goal. While on the penalty kill, Lining got in clear and made a move to his backhand before finishing through the five-hole. Lining's goal tied the game at one.

Weiss responded with another goal just over two minutes later on the powerplay to put Stevenson back in the lead, 2-1.

The Titans came back just over a minute later and netted their third goal of the game. Senior Drew DeMarti intercepted a pass at the top of the circle and beat Athens' goalie with a quick snap-shot. The goal gave Stevenson a 3-1 lead and proved to be the game-winner.

Stevenson will now face Detroit U-D Jesuit in the Regional final game on Saturday, March 6 at the [St. Clair Shores Civic Arena](#) at 8 p.m.

"Our kids genuinely like each other," Korolewicz said. "It makes it a lot better in these close games. We've always made it to this game, but we never could get past it. This game will help us carry momentum into Saturday."



**Detroit High School Sports Examiner**

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