

## **GAME 1:**

### **Blue Devils Defeat Dutchmen 3-1**

On a beautiful September afternoon the Guilderland Boy's Freshmen soccer team kicked off their season on their home field in front of a host of friendly soccer fans. Despite displaying greater team speed, superior teamwork, and a stout defense, the Dutchmen fell to the opportunistic Columbia Blue Devils by a score of 3-1. In the opening 10 minutes the Dutchmen had at least four shots on goal, with C. Connolly and C. Rubin firing from the left, J. McGee attacking up the middle and Zach Cleary shooting from right of goal. Unfortunately, none of the attempts challenged the Blue Devil goalie. A defensive breakdown finally gave the Blue Devils an opportunity to shoot and the low shot found the back of the net and Dutchmen trailed 1-0.

The Dutchmen immediately rallied, but C. O'Brien's shot was thwarted as was Zach Cleary's attempt, an attempt that was made possible by strong defensive presence of T. Polito. The Dutchmen continued to pressure the Blue Devils as the defense of T. Polito, B. Segal, N. Scott, and E. Kaufman kept the ball on Columbia's side of the field. Then C. O'Brien pounced on either a pass or loose ball and shot low into the left side of the net to tie the score.

The Dutchmen continued to pressure the Blue Devils as J. Hanlon, rocking subtle yet stylish Diadora Americanas, made a nice feed to C. O'Brien who was stymied by the Devil's keeper. Again, the Dutchmen defense prevented the ball from crossing mid-field and the offense moved the ball quickly and unselfishly from C. Czekay to Z. Cleary to C. Rubin to C. O'Brien for a shot that was deflected wide. A nice corner kick by J. Hanlon met J. McGee's head, was deflected by the keeper and struck again by C. Rubin, but it did not find the net.

While most of the Blue Devil's attempted counter attacks were routinely thwarted by the physical presence of defenders such as N. Scott, B. Segal, E. Kaufman, J. Polfleit, and C. Connolly, the Blue Devil's again seized the opportunity during a momentary breakdown and fired a hard shot that although partially deflected by keeper N. Bailly again found the back of the net and gave the Blue Devils a 2-1 lead as the first half ended.

Despite trailing 2-1 at the half, the Dutchmen parents and grandparents remained optimistic that their team would prevail as they had clearly dominated possession. In fact, one semi-knowledgeable fan insisted that the better team would win the game. A surprise appearance by the varsity coach of the 2008 Section 2 champions provided additional inspiration for the Dutchmen as they began the second half.

The second half was very much like the first as the Dutchmen controlled the ball, had many corner kick opportunities, and countless shots on goal all for naught, while Columbia converted on one of their two attempts. The first attempt came as a Blue Devil charged at the goal, keeper N. Bailly went to the ground, made the save and the defense cleared the ball out of danger. The second attempt and third and final Blue Devil goal came after a defensive foul gave Blue Devil B. Godgardt a direct kick from 20 yards out. Godgardt's shot appeared to be going wide right, but curled neatly into the upper right corner of the goal. The Dutchmen spurred by words of encouragement from their team photographer continued to exert pressure on the Blue Devils, but time expired before Guilderland could close the gap.

## GAME 2:

### Dutchmen Vanquish Blue Streaks 3-2

Guilderland Boy's Freshman soccer team, tastefully attired in their road-reds, rebounded from their season opening loss with a 3-2 come-from-behind victory over the Saratoga Blue Streaks at Gavin Park in a well played game in which both teams had multiple goal scoring opportunities. As the game began, the Dutchmen had several runs deep into Blue Streak territory that ended unsuccessfully. Approximately 16 minutes into the game, stalwart defender B. Segal pressed forward, made a strong move at the goal and drew a foul. Midfielder, J. McGee's direct kick arced over the wall and beyond the keeper's reach for an early lead.

The Dutchmen's strong defense stymied several Blue Streak attempts at or just beyond midfield and initiated the counter attack. T. Polito used his superior speed and aggressiveness to repeatedly suffocate the Blue Streak right wing's attempts to cross midfield. On several occasions, C. O'Brien led J. Hanlon deep down the left sideline and Hanlon served several nice crosses that had potential, but the Dutchmen could not quite finish. A breakaway by striker S. Cardiff was stopped by the Saratoga defense. A long carry by E. Kaufman led to a shot by J. McGee was stopped by the Blue Streak keeper. A N. Scott direct kick into the box was deflected by the Saratoga defense. A Blue Streak breakaway appeared dangerous, but keeper N. Bailly made the save. A foul and subsequent Blue Streak direct kick sailed over the goal. Another foul, dangerously close to the box yielded yet another direct kick for the home team. While this kick cleared the wall, N. Bailly was there for the save. Kaufman to A. Burns produced a nice chip service into the box that was deflected by the home defense. The Dutchmen quickly countered as a C. O'Brien pass down the left sideline to C. Connolly led to a long cross into the middle, but the Blue Streak defense stifled the attempt and the first half ended with the Dutchmen leading 1-0.

The second half began with an inspired Saratoga team swiftly attacking a Guilderland squad whose muscles had either stiffened during the break, or were daydreaming about the thousands of cars they must wash on Saturday morning. Within the first minute of action, a long left footed strike went far post-back-of-net and the game was tied 1-1.

The Dutchmen attempted a rally as striker C. Rubin with a perfectly timed run, received the first of many well timed and well placed passes from his mates and the first of several long breakaway attempts. Rubin's long carry at a dead sprint ended with a defender on his hip and a hard shot wide of the goal. Saratoga countered and a corner kick into the box was thwarted by N. Scott's header. Unfortunately, the Blue Streaks were able to regain possession and a hard strike from the middle of the field gave the home team the lead. The Dutchmen countered with a J. Hanlon cross that found C. O'Brien's head, but not the net. The Blue Streaks replied with a long shot that was denied by N. Bailly. The game went back and forth as an O'Brien direct kick was stopped by the keeper and the Saratoga counter was thwarted by Polito. Z. Cleary's shot from left of goal was again stopped by the Blue Streak keeper. C. Czekay's cross from the right wing was for naught as the keeper intercepted the pass. Saratoga's attempted counter was denied and the Dutchmen retaliated with one or two touch passes: McGee to Cleary to Rubin. Bang. Bang. Perfectly timed and placed and Rubin, tastefully attired in his *Nike Tiempo Legends* had another thrilling breakaway beginning just inside the midfield line. Bang. Left foot, back-of-net, tie score 2-2.

The newly inspired Dutchmen pressured the Blue Streak defense and an attacking O'Brien was fouled hard in the box. O'Brien's penalty kick was powerful, but over the net. The Saratoga response was again stifled and a quick succession of passes M. Nuanmin to O'Brien, to Cleary resulted in an offside call. Continued pressure and unselfish passing led to a Cleary to O'Brien assault on goal—hard foul in box—penalty kick. J. McGee took the kick and coolly deposited the ball in the back of the net and a 3-2 Dutchmen lead.

Saratoga responded with a dangerous looking cross that was headed away by the Dutchmen defense. Another attempt by the home team was intercepted and controlled by Connolly who fed Rubin on another perfectly timed run and midfield to goal breakaway but the hard shot was high and wide (um, Nike is calling—they want their shoes back :-P). As time ended, the Dutchmen breathed a sigh of relief as their victory deflated the threat of a practice devoted entirely to conditioning.

### **GAME 3:**

#### **Dutchmen Pound Plainsmen 4-1**

The Guilderland Boy's Freshman soccer team, resplendent in their road reds, soundly defeated the perennial powerhouse from Shenendehowa on the Plainsmens's home field on their sprawling campus in Clifton Park.

Despite the long commute, the game began on schedule under a warm September sun. The Dutchmen attacked early with outside midfielders Connolly and Cleary advancing the ball deep on the left and right respectively and crossing the ball to their strikers while the Plainsmen defenders scrambled to clear the ball out of danger. Two early corner kicks by O'Brien yielded nothing but exasperation from the Coach. The first corner kick was perfect: in the box, far post. Yet, somehow missed the heads and feet of the Dutchmen players and the Coach posed the rhetorical, "why is no one far post"? The second corner kick went behind the net. Meanwhile, the Dutchmen backline of Polito, Scott, Segal, & Kaufman vigorously defended the midfield stripe, reversed the ball swiftly and gave the offense multiple opportunities and keeper K. Weeden ample time to contemplate his post-game burger.

Success came early as Connolly pounced on a Plainsman defender and forcefully separated him from the ball, gained control and centered it neatly to striker Hanlon who silenced the sideline critiques of his fashion faux pas (white socks + road game = blame mom) by ricocheting the ball off the far right post and a 1-0 Dutchmen lead. The Dutchmen continued to exert pressure as corner kicks by O'Brien and Hanlon and a cross by Connolly were cleared by the Shenendehowa defenders.

The Dutchmen's second goal came as O'Brien delivered a pass that initially appeared to be too deep, but was in fact perfect in placement and pace as it proved too tempting for the Plainsmen keeper luring him to the edge of the box as he charged the ball while Rubin timed his run and with a burst of speed slipped by the last defender, beat the hard charging keeper to the ball, danced nimbly around the sliding keeper and was rewarded with an empty net and an "easy" goal and a 2-0 lead. Soon after, outside middle, C. Czekay, surged up the right sideline found Rubin with an accurate cross and Rubin went right foot, low left, back-of-net and a 3-0 lead (Nike called and said you can keep the Tiempos).

The Plainsmen finally pierce the rugged Dutchmen defense and keeper Weeden touched the ball for the first time. A semi-knowledgeable fan insists that that the touch is not a save, merely a keeper keeping his box tidy in an effort more akin to dusting. The Plainsmen respond with serious assault on the goal and keeper Weeden defends the outer edges of the penalty box with a fearless sliding save. Defender C. Noonan moves the ball quickly to O'Brien who switches the field nicely with a long pass to Czekay, but the Plainsmen defenders repel the Dutchmen attack and swiftly counter. Again, Weeden extends to the borders of the penalty box for a save. As time runs out in the first half, a frustrated Plainsmen player attempts to show his displeasure with central middle, J. McGee's aggressive play by delivering a hands on message. He receives a yellow card for his efforts and the half ends with the Dutchmen leading 3-0.

The second half got underway with a McGee strike that was denied by the Plainsmen keeper. A modest scare occurred when a violent collision between sprinting defenders Polito and Kaufman left them both in a heap on the field. As the defenders shook off the effects of

the collision and checked to make sure all of their body parts were intact, the Plainsmen seized the breakaway opportunity to attack the goal in a failed effort. The Plainsmen corner kick was successfully cleared by the Dutchmen defenders. Another shot by McGee was stymied and Shen responded with one wide shot and another that was saved by Weeden. The Dutchmen countered as Rubin carried deep into the left side of Shen territory and passed to striker S. Cardiff. Right place. Right time. Right foot. Goal! The Dutchmen lead four to zero. Semi-knowledgeable fan insists that it is four to nil, rather than four to zero. Discussion ensues, no resolution.

The Dutchmen continue to pressure the Plainsmen as M. Nuanmin and J. Callender work the sidelines with speed and tenacity and B. Daggett-Orr diligently works to free himself from the Plainsmen defenders. A corner kick by Hanlon finds McGee's head, then Burn's foot before being rescued by the Plainsmen keeper. On defense, Kaufmann tests his considerable speed in a head to head, hip to hip race to the goal with a Plainsmen striker. Keeper Weeden, perhaps inspired by the test of speed, races to the very edge of the penalty box, beating both players by a step and clearing the ball to midfield as fans breath sigh of relief. The Plainsmen continued to press the Dutchmen, but are unable to successfully penetrate the Dutchmen defense as A. Burns continually clears balls out of danger, J. Polfleit harasses the Plainsmen's attackers, and Weeden keeps a clean sheet with multiple saves. One enthusiastic fan's calls of "expedite" "expedite" failed to inspire the Dutchmen to greater heights and were in fact met with snorts of derision and snarky rebukes by fellow spectators. As the final minutes wind down, defender Segal channels his inner Adrian Peterson and executes a perfect stiff arm, successfully separating the Shen player from both the ball and the turf. The ensuing direct kick from just outside the left side of the penalty box goes far post and the Plainsmen finally find the back of the net. The Dutchmen will enjoy yet another long bus ride home after their 4-1 victory.

## **GAME 4:**

### **Guilderland Beats Ballston Spa 2-2**

Technically, it was a tie. It is often said that a tie is like kissing your sister. However, as recently presented in the highly entertaining documentary, Harvard Beats Yale 29-29, sometimes a tie has the feel of victory. In the very physical but cleanly played game against Ballston Spa, the Dutchmen fought back from a two goal deficit to tie the score in the waning minutes of regulation. At that moment, the Dutchmen celebrated as if they had won the game. However, after two additional overtime periods left the score unchanged, the result felt more like a tie as the Dutchmen's two game win streak was ended.

The game against the Ballston Spa Scotties was the most competitive and entertaining of the young season as both teams played excellent defense in a very physical game in which bodies flew in every direction. The Scotties fielded a large, mature, and aggressive defensive line that made life difficult for the Dutchmen. Guilderland began the game with a poorly executed "Levernois" that left the Dutchmen vulnerable to the quick counter attack by the Scotties. The Scotties countered with a feed to #16 their outside middie, a dangerous athlete who was both physical and incredibly fast. Fortunately, #16 was checked by T. Polito, who after toying with the opposition through the first three games, finally had a challenge worthy of his prodigious speed and talent. Losing his first footrace, Polito was called for a foul outside of the penalty box. The direct kick was saved by keeper Weeden. The highly entertaining dual between #16 and Polito occurred frequently throughout the game as Polito repeatedly thwarted the Scotties attacks. Fortunately, Polito was backed up by defenders Segal and Scott who often made overlapping defensive runs that forcefully prevented #16 from turning the corner on Polito.

Meanwhile the Guilderland offense had difficulty penetrating the Ballston Spa defense as the Dutchmen appeared content to wait for the ball while the Scottie defenders aggressively attacked the ball. A Cleary-Rubin-O'Brien attempt was thwarted as was a Rubin-Kaufman-Rubin attempt. Czekay to Hanlon yielded a shot and a save by the tall B-Spa keeper (unconfirmed rumor that the keep also plays for the B-Spa JV team). Czekay is fouled; the direct kick by Scott reaches Kaufman far post, but behind the net. Segal to Kaufman to Czekay fizzles. Czekay wins the ball feeds Hanlon, keeper makes save. Segal to Czekay to Cardiff stopped by the Scottie defense.

At around the 25 minute mark, the Dutchmen took a mental and physical break and the Scotties controlled the ball through multiple passes, found an open man in front of the net and the low shot found the corner of the goal. Ten minutes later a shot or cross from the far right side deflected off a Dutchmen player for an own goal and the half ended with Ballston Spa leading 2-0.

Second half play was very similar to the first half as both teams played excellent defense. Polito nullified the efforts of #16 and Segal, Scott, Kaufman, Polfleit, and Burns made life difficult for the Scotties. Highlights of the second half involved an incredible diving save by Weeden that prevents a goal and a hard shot on goal by O'Brien which was deflected due to the quick reflexes and long wingspan of the Scottie's keeper. Midway through the second half the Dutchmen switch to a 3-4-3 line-up in an effort to close the deficit. A direct kick by McGee gives the Dutchmen their best opportunity, but it sails over the net. A hard sliding tackle by McGee yields a foul and a warning as the Dutchmen increase their intensity. Rubin-McGee to Hanlon and shot is saved by the keeper. Segal pressing forward stretches for the ball and cracks a hard shot past the diving goalie as Guilderland scores their first goal of the game. The Dutchmen continue to pressure the

Scotties and with time beginning to run out Cardiff receives a pass in front of the goal and is fouled hard by the Scottie defender. "Iceman" McGee is selected for the penalty kick and he ignores the pressure and coolly strikes the ball into the lower left corner of the goal, the game is tied and the Dutchmen celebrate as if victorious.

The first overtime begins with the Scotties' displaying newfound intensity, but the Dutchmen defense is up to the task and keeper Weeden makes several saves. The second overtime begins with the Dutchmen increasing their level of intensity and they are rewarded for the efforts with a corner kick. The kick is well struck by O'Brien, but the ball is deflected over the goal by the B-Spa keeper. The next corner kick is cleared by the defense and Kaufman's shot goes high. As time expires the score remains unchanged and the Dutchmen record becomes 2-1-1. The rematch at home on October 23<sup>rd</sup> should be a "can't miss" affair.

Side notes: Jack McGee has been moved up to JV. Good luck Jack. You will be missed.

## GAME 5:

### Guilderland Beats Bethlehem 3-1

On a cold windy September afternoon, that had fans dreaming of their snuggies, the Guilderland Dutchmen Freshman team defeated the visiting Eagles of Bethlehem. The Dutchmen opened the game with a strong wind at their backs and used this advantage to secure a 3-0 lead by half-time. Early in the game Connolly and Kaufman worked together as a strong win by Connolly and nice lead to Kaufman advanced the ball deep into Eagle territory. Bethlehem countered with pressure and a shot that appear to be deflected wide. The ensuing corner kick was unsuccessful. Hanlon with a nice long lead to Cleary yielded a corner kick for the Dutchmen. The kick by Scott entered the box, found Hanlon's head, but missed the net. By the coach's count, this was one of four headers in the box by Hanlon, a feat that was impressive and bodes well for the future. This was followed by a cross by Polito that carried on the wind past all Dutchmen players. An O'Brien shot was denied. A Bethlehem counter yielded a shot and save by Weeden. A very nice long lead pass from O'Brien to Rubin had potential, but thwarted by the strong Bethlehem defense. O'Brien is fouled. Given the strong wind, his direct kick from 30 yards out could easily go over the goal, but is struck perfectly and lasers over the wall and the keeper's outstretched arms. Goal! 1-0.

Another foul and O'Brien direct kick is stopped by the Bethlehem keeper. Another long direct kick from Scott reaches the box but striker Cardiff's shot goes wide. Approximately 20 minutes into the game, Cleary wins the ball from a Bethlehem player and passes to Cardiff who passes to Connolly whose shot is deflected by the defense. The corner kick by Scott, is perfect mid-box, Connolly quickly settles the ball in a sea of orange defenders and fires it past the diving keeper. Goal! (all of this team effort was captured on film in pictures 9-20 in the most recent Picasa album by the team photographer--great job Mr. Photographer). About 1 minute later, Connolly is fouled near midfield. Defender Scott, taking the direct kick, lines up his approach, selects a 7 iron, checks the wind, and opts for his pitching wedge, lofts a beautiful shot that carries into the box, the Bethlehem keeper apparently misjudges the wind and makes a late break for the ball but it bounces and clears the keeper. Goal! 3-0 Dutchmen. Tiger Woods couldn't have done better.

While the remaining 20 minutes of the first half did not yield any more goals, the Dutchmen continued to use the combination of a strong wind and stout defense to apply pressure on the visiting Eagles. Multiple mid-field stops by Segal, Polito, Scott, Kaufman, and Polfleit gave the Dutchmen a variety of opportunities. Strong defense and a long carry by Polito leads to a foul and direct kick by Scott that is headed away by the Bethlehem defense. Rubin's shot is saved by the keeper. Polito to O'Brien-shot-save. Quick passing from Segal to Cleary to Segal to Cardiff advances the ball but is disrupted by the defense and a Cleary shot is stopped. A Polito carry and pass to Noonan is repelled. A Scott stop and pass to O'Brien to Rubin to O'Brien yields a shot and diving save the Eagle keeper. Corner kick by Guilderland leads to a scramble and a Segal shot goes just over the goal.

As the second half begins, one fan makes a very accurate prediction that the wind will provide the Eagles with at least 8 shots on goal. Thus the story of the second half is the stellar play of K. Weeden whose numerous just in the nick-of-time saves make one wonder if he isn't toying with the opposition and timing his efforts for maximal theatrical effect. A hands foul by Burns leads to a Bethlehem direct kick, saved by Weeden. A Bethlehem breakaway brings Weeden charging out of the box, taking the angle away from the Bethlehem striker whose shot goes wide. Another Bethlehem attack brings Weeden to the edge of the box to kick the ball clear just ahead of the

sprinting Bethlehem player. A Dutchmen defensive flub provides Bethlehem with an opportunity, but Weeden again beats the striker to the ball by a half step. With a Bethlehem attacker bearing down on the goal, excellent communication between Scott and Weeden allow a kick save by Weeden. The keeper highlight was performed a few minutes later, as Weeden pulls a Houdini and nimbly darts between two aggressively charging Eagles to grab the ball and vanish while the two Eagles crash in a heap in the box.

The Dutchmen counter attacked several times, but were thwarted by the Bethlehem keeper or by High and Wide. With less than five minutes left in the game, a long Bethlehem direct kick was bobbled by Weeden and found the back of the net for a final score of 3-1.

## **GAME 6:**

### **Guilderland Ties Niskayuna 1-1**

The Guilderland Boys Freshman team was repeatedly denied by the excellent play of the visiting Niskayuna keeper for 79 plus minutes on a cool overcast afternoon. Yet, with the final minute winding down the Dutchmen were finally able to beat the keeper when a corner kick and hard Czekay header off the crossbar provoked a mad scramble in front to the net in which it appeared that Callender did a chest trap, the keeper dove and Cleary muscled the ball into the net to tie the game. The Dutchmen celebrated enthusiastically, relaxed momentarily, and almost lost the game as the Silver Warriors immediately attacked straight down the center of the field without meeting any resistance and a 1v1 opportunity with the keeper. Fortunately, keeper Weeden came far enough out of the goal to reduce the angle and the shot was barely wide and the game went into the first of two overtime periods.

The game began with the Dutchmen in their home whites executing a decent “Levernois” that yielded a Hanlon shot, followed by a Czekay shot. This was followed by a succession fouls called against the Dutchmen as the referee kept a close watch on the action. Since all of the fouls occurred near mid-field, the Niskayuna direct kicks were never dangerous. The Silver Warriors were also called for several fouls which resulted in a direct kick by Scott that went through the box but received no further guidance from the Dutchmen players. A direct kick by O’Brien following a foul on Cleary and one by Scott following a foul on Segal both had potential but nothing else. A Rubin shot is deflected.

The Dutchmen also moved the ball swiftly with quick passes: Rubin to Hanlon to Connolly to Hanlon...a Cleary shot is denied. Connolly deep to Rubin, back to Connolly to O’Brien and the shot is denied. Polito stifles the Niskayuna counter attack. A Czekay to Rubin to Czekay to Segal who carries...feeds Cleary and shot-save is a testament to the art of teamwork. Connolly hustle wins ball, feed to Cleary, shot-save. Hanlon works hard to find an opening and rips a hard shot...save. Hanlon again rips another hard shot, but the Nisky keeper makes a diving save. The Dutchmen corner kick goes behind the net and out of play.

The Niskayuna counter yields a corner kick into the box, but it is cleared by the defense. The Dutchmen counter yields a Callender shot from the left and another diving save. During the last five minutes of the half, the Dutchmen defense smothers multiple Niskayuna attempts as Segal clears the ball out of danger and Polito and Kaufman both have strong wins and execute textbook ballectomies—surgically separating the Silver Warriors from the ball. The half ends with the score tied nil-nil.

The second half opens as O’Brien to Callender-shot-wide. Nisky counters, but is stifled by Weeden’s save. The Dutchmen suppress a Niskayuna corner kick and pressure in the box and counter with a Rubin shot that is denied. The Silver Warriors counter with a long feed that is misplaced by the Dutchmen defense, keeper Weeden comes out hard, but is beat and Niskayuna grabs the lead 1-0.

The Dutchmen counter as Connolly attacks the outer corner of the goalie box, the ball comes back to Hanlon, tastefully attired in his black Diadora Americanas, and from just outside of the goalie box, Hanlon spansks the Adidas right off the ball...it is going high right upper 90...could be perfect...just nicks the outer post and is wide.

A Niskayuna counter yields a corner kick and a layoff pass, but the pressure from the defenders forces the shot over the goal. The Dutchmen counter, nice service by Cleary, but the keeper is out to make the save. Nisky follows with a hard skip shot that while tricky to handle is saved by Weeden. With time beginning to run out on the Dutchmen, coach goes to a 3-4-3 formation in a last ditch effort to get the tying goal. The Niskayuna coach counters with frequent substitutions to bleed time off the clock. A Cleary cross has potential, Connolly misses the header and Cardiff's shot goes wide. Guilderland's intensity mounts...shot by Rubin-denied. A Dutchmen direct kick is saved by the Nisky keeper. O'Brien's intense work and pass to Czekay results in a shot over the net. Rubin's shot is deflected wide, a scramble results in another wide shot. Finally, with time running out, Czekay's hard header off the crossbar yields a mad scramble, a Cleary goal, and yet another last second tie for the Dutchmen.

Overtime was marked by the return of stalwart defender Polito who sat the entire second half with what appeared to be a battlefield amputation below the knee. Fortunately, adhering to the sound medical advice of "rub some dirt on it" he appeared to grow a new limb and was as good as new for overtime. A refreshed Polito helped prevent any serious threats by the Silver Warrior's by running down any noteworthy attempts and reversing the ball. The Dutchmen passed the ball well, but were ultimately unable to convert and the game ended 1-1.

## **GAME 7:**

### **Guilderland Dutchmen Tie Latham Blue Bison 2-2**

The Guilderland Boys Freshman soccer team earned their third come-from-behind tie and double overtime game of the season against the Latham Blue Bison. As both teams warmed up on this cool damp October afternoon, the sideline banter among the home fans involved predicting the final outcome. One pessimistic fan, apparently impressed with the substantial size advantage of the Blue Bison athletes, predicted that the Dutchmen would lose by a score of 4-1. This prediction drew the rebuke of a semi-knowledgeable fan who then called the final score as 2-2. This sideline Nostradamus also predicted that he would continue to remind the pessimistic fan of the relative accuracy of their predictions.

In any event, the game began with the Blue Bison displaying good ball movement by coolly, confidently, and crisply playing the ball back and passing it around and keeping it out of reach of the Dutchmen. The Blue Bison pressured the Dutchmen defense early, but first Scott, then keeper Weeden cleared the ball out of danger. The Blue Bison attempted a few long strikes and one nice service to a header, but none were difficult to handle. Kaufman hustle down the sideline prevents the Latham striker from turning the corner. Polito tests his speed against #20 the fastest of the Blue Bison players matches him stride for stride and bumps him off the ball. A Latham corner kick is cleared by a Scott header. Segal playing smart aggressive soccer feeds Hanlon, sprints for a potential give-and-go, Hanlon feeds Rubin deep and Rubin crosses the ball nicely, but the Blue Bison defense repels the attack. A Blue Bison counter attack is thwarted as Polito executes a textbook ballectomy. Latham responds with a shot that goes wide and another that is saved by Weeden. Segal with a strong win feeds O'Brien. Good ball movement by the Dutchmen as Segal to Rubin to Hanlon and Hanlon to O'Brien to Rubin move the ball swiftly but no shots result. O'Brien to Rubin has potential, but off-side is the call and the ref thanks the fans for their assistance with his call. The Dutchmen respond with Czekay to O'Brien to Cleary but no shot.

The Blue Bison's #20 is surprising some of the Dutchmen defenders with his burst of speed and better communication is necessary to alert the defense when #20 is preparing to strike. A Latham breakaway is averted as Weeden runs out to make the save. Hanlon to O'Brien is called off-side. Connolly to Rubin and a Connolly win and feed to Cleary don't yield shots. Rubin to Czekay to Hanlon to Cleary results in a shot that is wide. Connolly to O'Brien to Rubin who delivers a nice shot on the run is denied by the keeper. Latham counters with a hard shot that is denied by Weeden. Connolly attacks the goal and is fouled hard outside of the box. The direct kick by O'Brien is deflected. The half ends in a nil-nil tie.

A mere two minutes into the second half and Cardiff feeds Rubin who shoots: left foot-right corner-GOAL! Dutchmen lead 1-0. The Dutchmen display excellent ball movement as Czekay to Rubin to O'Brien to Rubin who centers the ball and Connolly attempts a chip shot that is saved by the keeper. A Segal defensive sprint bumps the Blue Bison off the ball. A foul by Connolly outside of the box results in a direct kick into a crowd in front of the net and it is poked in by a Blue Bison for a tie game at 1-1. A nice win and attack by O'Brien leads to a throw-in. Hanlon expertly seals his man, receives the throw and crosses into the box, but the keep makes the save. The Latham counter attack leads to a foul by Scott just outside of the box. The direct kick enters the box and the Blue Bison shot ricochets off the right post and into the goal and the Dutchmen fall behind 1-2. A hard foul by Scott yields another direct kick that is saved by Weeden. A

highly questionable call against Segal who cleanly wins the ball, but is called for the foul because he is simply much stronger than his opponent provides the Blue Bison with yet another direct kick. The kick goes wide. A hand ball against Latham leads to a direct kick by Hanlon that is saved by the keeper. With about six minutes left in the game, O'Brien feeds Rubin who makes a nice run down the left side and a beautiful left footed strike to the far right corner of the net: GOAL! 2-2.

Latham counters with pressure and a shot that clips the post and goes wide as Weeden dives to block the goal. Latham attacks again and the shot goes high and wide. Regulation ends with the score 2-2.

As the first overtime begins, Latham earns a corner kick that is saved by Weeden. The Blue Bison attack again and Weeden comes out hard to make the save. The Dutchmen counter with Segal to O'Brien to Cleary, nice feed to Rubin, who beats the charging keeper and shoots, but a sprinting defender clears the ball in the nick-of-time. The subsequent corner kick is denied. Rubin is tripped, quickly plays ball to Czekay who crosses to Cleary's head, but is denied. The Dutchmen again display excellent teamwork as Hanlon to O'Brien to Cleary to Connolly who lays it off has potential, but again the Dutchmen are denied. The first overtime period ends with a scary moment as Czekay goes down in intense pain with what at first appears to be a serious injury. Fortunately, the injury is a very painful cleat-to-ankle bone bruise, but not a debilitating injury.

The two teams battled for another 10 minutes, but neither was able to score a deciding goal. The Dutchmen's record is now 3-1-3.

## **GAME 8:**

### **Guilderland Dutchmen Need Extra Time to Defeat Garnet Raiders 3-2**

Fourth time is the charm. The Guilderland Boys Freshman soccer team played their third overtime game in a row and fourth in five games and finally came away with a victory rather than a tie. To the relief of some very chilly fans, the Dutchmen only needed about 90 seconds of the first over-time period to score and end the game as a Callender pass to Rubin was worked deep down the left side, crossed the ball nicely to Hanlon's head and Cleary banged it into the net for a 3-2 victory.

The game began on the Colonie High School soccer field on a very cold October day. Colonie shot early from long distance and Weeden handled the ball with ease. An excited fan's shouts of "stay intense" motivated the Dutchmen defensive line of Gallo, Burns, Segal, and Polito. A Colonie corner kick was deflected by the defenders and cleared out of danger by Nuanmin. Connolly, Hanlon, O'Brien strung together a series of passes to quickly switch fields to Cleary running the left wing.

Polito's speed on defense kept the very large and physical #23 Garnet Raider at bay. A Burns foul gave the Garnet Raiders an early opportunity with a direct kick just outside of the box. The kick was played low and somehow managed to traverse the entire width of the goalie box without finding the feet of the Dutchmen or their opponents. A nice stop by Burns and strong and long clear by Gallo removed the ball from scoring range. The Dutchmen countered with nice teamwork as Segal to Hanlon to a sprinting Czekay moved the ball deep into Colonie territory. A Czekay shot was denied. A strong surge by Connolly and pass to Rubin is denied by the keeper. Colonie responds with another long strike that is easily handled by Weeden. Solid defense on #23 by Segal produces a deep ball to Czekay on the right wing. The Garnet Raiders counter attack but are called off-side. The Dutchmen respond with a nice Czekay-Rubin-Czekay passing display. Polito again with physical defense against #23, denies the counter attack. O'Brien to Kaufman produces a long run deep down the left side. The Garnet Raiders counter as #23 begins a break-away up the left side of the field that looks very dangerous. Fortunately, Czekay's hard sprint to catch up and smart physical foul stops the attack. Although the ensuing direct kick is taken from quite a distance, it is well struck forcing Weeden to quickly assess the velocity, altitude, and unfriendly crowd in the box before making a nice save.

A short time later, #23, perhaps inspired by his unsuccessful encounter w/Czekay, muscles his way through a host of Dutchmen and blasts a shot at close range. Fortunately, the shot is high. Soon after, a Colonie striker (Uwi?) fires a strong shot from the center-top of the goalie box to the left corner of the goal and the Dutchmen fall behind 0-1. The Dutchmen respond and earn a corner kick. Scott's kick is deflected out. His second appears to find Czekay or Czekay's perfect positioning screens the goalie and the ball finds the back of the net for a 1-1 tie.

Inspired, a deep ball by O'Brien leads a sprinting Czekay deep down the right side. Czekay's shot goes low, left corner and is denied by the diving deflection from the Colonie keeper. A hustling Cardiff coolly knocks the loose ball into the net! 2-1 Dutchmen lead.

The Garnet Raiders respond and a surging #23 is fouled in the penalty box. The penalty kick is delivered hard and high, but is denied by the cat-quick reflects of Weeden who succeeds in punching the ball over the goal. The subsequent corner kick goes out of play. At the half, although leading 2-1, the team receives quite an energetic lecture about their play from the coach.

Early in the second half a Czekay shot brings the keeper down but he bobbles the attempted save and a charging Daggett-Orr is almost there in time to knock the ball into the empty net but the keeper manages to gain control at the last second. Colonie counters swiftly, gets off a shot, but is denied by Weeden. The Dutchmen response is thwarted by an off-side call. Polito to Hanlon to Segal moves the ball to no avail. Strong defensive effort by both Kaufman and Noonan deny counter attacks by Colonie. Cardiff to Segal-shot-high.

A defensive foul by the Dutchmen produces a direct kick and a Garnet Raider heads the ball into the goal for a 2-2 tie. As Dutchmen fans lament the possibility of enduring overtime on such a cold day, the players respond as Rubin executes a sweet dummy to Cardiff-shot-denied. A foul gives the Dutchmen a direct kick which appears harmless, but Segal goes down and the game is stopped long enough to carry the injured Dutchman to the sideline. Segal's mom exhibits remarkable self-restraint and does not sprint across the field to attend to her son. Fortunately for the Dutchmen, it appears that Segal's injury will not be season ending and may be a deep and painful thigh bruise.

When play resumes, Colonie works a give-and-go down the right sideline that results in a shot and save by Weeden. Noonan makes a nice win and feeds Hanlon who finds Polfleit. Colonie's counter is stopped by Connolly and Polito. Scott to Hanlon to Cleary to Hanlon to Rubin-shot denied, but excellent teamwork and ball movement. The Colonie counter is thwarted by the physical defense of Polito. Connolly to Rubin to Cleary switch fields nicely the cross goes behind the goal. Colonie responds and earns a corner kick. The kick enters the box amidst a scrum, the shot is denied by Weeden, Noonan clears the ball and Connolly steps hard to force a shot wide. As Colonie continues to pressure, Kaufman sacrifices his body to clear a ball away from a charging Garnet Raider.

Overtime appears doubtful as #23 attacks the goal hard, but a fearless Weeden comes out for a sliding save just ahead of the charging Raider. Both teams appear interested in averting overtime as play becomes more intense. A hard foul by Connolly results in a direct kick that is cleared by the defense. Scott makes a big defensive stop and Kaufman clears the ball as regulation time expires.

Fortunately, for the cold fans, the Dutchmen waste no time and use less than two minutes of overtime to finish the game. Their record is now 4-1-3 and the Dutchmen have not lost since their season opener against Columbia.

## **GAME 9:**

### **Dutchmen Avenue Only Loss – Defeat Columbia 6-4**

On a very chilly mid-October afternoon the Guilderland Boy's Freshman soccer team traveled to East Greenbush and defeated the Blue Devils 6-4. The game was one of the best played of the season in terms of teamwork and ball movement as the Dutchmen appeared to be a half a step ahead of the Blue Devils and were able to find passing lanes and connect with open teammates.

The game opened with the Dutchmen pressuring early and dominating ball control as O'Brien had a strong win and fed Cleary for an early opportunity. The Dutchmen continued to move the ball quickly through a succession of passes. Rubin to O'Brien to Cleary. Connolly to O'Brien to Cleary. Connolly carries the ball up the right side, centers to Daggett-Orr, ball loose, Czekay shot-denied. Daggett-Orr with a nice layoff pass to Czekay-shot denied. O'Brien is fouled and tries to sneak the direct kick under the wall, but is denied. The Blue Devil counter is stopped by a perfect ballectomy by Polito. Connolly carries up the middle feeds Czekay whose nice cross to Daggett-Orr has potential but is stopped by the Blue Devil keeper. Strong defense by Kaufman, Polito, Segal and Gallo prevent any strong challenges by Columbia. A Rubin foul leads to a long direct kick, but Bailly is there for the save.

A strong win by Connolly, carry down the right side and cross to Rubin leads to a foul in the box. The penalty kick is taken by Connolly, who looks right and drives the ball low to the left corner- GOAL! 1-0.

The Dutchmen continued to pressure as Czekay on one of many sprints down the right side carries the ball deep and crosses nicely. The Blue Devil defense holds up and clears the ball. The Columbia counter is stopped and a Noonan clear leads a sprinting Rubin to the goal. The keeper comes out hard and makes the save just ahead of Rubin. Columbia counters with a sprint down the sideline, however, their speed is no match for Polito who wins the race and clears the ball. O'Brien switches fields nicely and leads Czekay at mid-field and a long sprinting carry by Czekay and a nice cross somehow misses multiple Dutchmen in front of the goal. However, Cleary is well positioned far-post and bangs the ball home! 2-0.

Columbia responds with pressure. Noonan clears the ball, then Polfleit makes a nice stop. However, Columbia gets a chip and a head in the box and the defense losses track of the ball and a Blue Devil shoots low-left and the keeper has no chance. 2-1.

The Dutchmen respond as Rubin sprints down the left side, O'Brien shoots-save. Callender shoots-save. O'Brien to Czekay is headed clear. Polito makes the stop, a service by O'Brien is headed by Connolly then Cleary to Cardiff-shot-miss. A Columbia counter is stopped as Noonan clears. Nice layoff header by Hanlon to Cleary has potential. A Hanlon cross to Callender is denied. Strong defense by Gallo and a Segal clear and then a strong win by Segal quickly end the Blue Devil counters. Another nice switch of the field as O'Brien to Cleary to Hanlon has potential. A cross to O'Brien is knocked loose and Polito steps hard on the ball and surges to the goal and fires a shot that is bobbled but saved by the keeper. The clear does not go far and Polito again steps hard, wins the ball and surges up the left side, crosses to Hanlon who slides and stretches to drive the ball into the net! 3-1.

The Dutchmen continue to move the ball exceptionally well as a Cleary to Hanlon to Cleary-cross for a Cardiff header is well executed. As Columbia prepares for a throw-in Kaufman takes a moment to measure himself against an extremely large Blue Devil. Although his head only is about number high, Kaufman wins the ball and the ball moves to Cardiff to Hanlon for a cross and save. Columbia counter attacks and the ball breaks loose despite strong defense by Polfleit and the Blue Devils again shoot low left and the keeper has no chance. 3-2. O'Brien to Czekay yields a shot and save as the half ends.

The second half is very similar to the first, as the Dutchmen continue to exploit open passing lanes and find their teammates. The ball moves swiftly from Cardiff to Hanlon to Cardiff to Callender. O'Brien is fouled, the Hanlon direct kick is saved by the keeper. O'Brien feeds Kaufman whose shot is deflected, he shoots again but the Blue Devil defender is able to deflect once again. O'Brien to Kaufman-cross to Callender-shot-save. A Hanlon corner kick goes to Kaufman who is fouled. The O'Brien direct kick clears the defense and goes into the box as a hustling Kaufman slide-kicks the ball into the back of the net! 4-2.

The Dutchmen continued to attack as Connolly is fouled outside of the box. The direct kick goes over the goal. Another direct kick leads Rubin deep left, a nice cut back and cross to Connolly has potential. The Dutchmen earn a corner kick and Kaufman, rather than kicking into the box, plays a nice short corner to O'Brien who has time and rips a shot to the left-back-of-net! 5-2.

Columbia responds as a Blue Devil player angles across the field and while harassed by Connolly, gets a step and fires a hard shot. Left foot, far right post. Keeper has no chance. 5-3.

The Dutchmen pressure continues as Connolly works the deep right side and crosses to an open Rubin, the ball is high and Rubin makes like a Rocket, reaching high, but the shot goes well over. A Cleary shot goes wide. The Blue Devils are thwarted as Bailly comes well out of the goal for a nice save. The Dutchmen counter as a nice lead by Cleary and a well timed run takes Rubin behind the defense. A couple of touches and it is 1 vs 1 with the keeper. Left foot, right side of net! 6-3.

Another opportunity is squandered as a beautiful pass by Connolly leads a sprinting Hanlon whose equally beautiful lead pass to Rubin results in another 1 vs 1, but the left-footed shot goes wide left. The Dutchmen defense led by Polito and Burns stops several Blue Devil counter attacks. Yet when the defense loses track of the ball, the Columbia seizes the opportunity and fires a shot into the goal. 6-4.

The Dutchmen respond with a long carry down the middle by Gallo, a defensive stop by Weeden and a surging Nuanmin down the right side for a shot that goes high. As time winds down, Columbia rips a shot at the left side of the goal only to be denied by an incredible diving save by Bailly who scrambles to his feet secures the loose ball. The Dutchmen's record is now 5-1-3 with several difficult games left on the schedule.

## **GAME 10:**

### **Flu Depleted Dutchmen Defeat Plainsmen 1-0**

On a warm October afternoon, the Guilderland Boy's Freshman soccer team defeated the Shenendehowa Plainsmen 1-0 on the Dutchmen's home field. The Dutchmen overcame the absence of at least three players who were home with the flu and did just enough to earn their third victory in a row. The game opened with Callender and Czekay working the ball deep down the left and right sides without success. A Czekay to Callender to O'Brien sequence yielded a shot and a save by the Plainsmen keeper. The Shenendehowa counter was easily rebuffed by Scott. Initially, neither team had much success as the Dutchmen offense was unable to attack effectively and the Dutchmen defense anchored by Segal, Scott, Polfleit, and Kaufman prevented the Plainsmen from getting any decent looks at the goal. A Rubin heel pass to Czekay on the right wing and a cross by Czekay has potential, but nothing more. When Shen counters, Weeden comes rushing to the edge of the box for the save and his effort draws some hard contact from the charging striker. A nice bit of teamwork as Hanlon or Cleary sends the ball to Rubin who applies a burst of speed to gain separation from the defender and booms a quick shot that goes over the goal, through the trees, across the railroad tracks and into the industrial park.

The Dutchmen appear to be waking up as O'Brien reads the Plainsmen's intent and jumps a passing lane to intercept the ball at mid-field and feed Rubin deep down the left side. Rubin centers to Cardiff, but the defense is well positioned and denies the Dutchmen attack. The counter is stifled by Polfleit who feeds Hanlon who quickly passes to O'Brien who carries the ball very deep into the box as the defender continues to retreat rather than challenge the ball. O'Brien's shot from close range goes over the goal. A Shenendehowa counter yields a shot and a save by Weeden. A Shen defender possesses the ball at mid-field and attacks down the center meeting little or no resistance. Fortunately, Weeden is prepared and makes the save.

A sweet feed from Cardiff leads a sprinting Rubin towards the goal with a defender on his right hip. Cool and composed, Rubin cuts the ball hard, the defender sprints past and with a burst Rubin angles across the face of the goal for a 1 vs 1 with the keeper. Right foot, low left corner, the keeper has no chance! 1-0.

The Plainsmen attempt to respond, but are denied several times by defender Burns. Kaufman carries down the left side and delivers a nice cross into the box, but O'Brien's shot is deflected by the defense. The Plainsmen's quick counter yields a break-away and long sprinting carry by their striker. Fortunately, Segal is able to catch up and play a rugged bump and run and reduce the options of the attacker. The hard shot goes low left and only a diving save by Weeden prevents the ball from reaching the net. Weeden scrambles but can't control the ball, but the defense arrives to clear the ball from danger. Rubin is fouled and the direct kick by O'Brien goes wide left. O'Brien follows up with a hard shot that is saved by the keeper. Burns clears the ball from danger and O'Brien has a nice carry through traffic stutter stepping and faking his way closer to the goal. His shot is deflected by the defense. Kaufman uses excellent body positioning to win a loose ball carry to the corner and deliver a nice feed to Rubin in the center who drives the ball low toward the right corner of the goal, but the keeper makes an excellent diving save. The half ends with the Dutchmen leading 1-0.

Shen dominated the ball during most of the 2nd half but the Dutchmen were able to hold on to the lead. The second half began with a surprisingly strong Shen attack, we had not seen in the first half. Weeden makes the save which somehow found Scott's head to a Hanlon sprint up the pitch to a Rubin run at the goal. Czekay holds his line and feeds several to Rubin but the goal is denied. The ball is quickly passed to Shen's number 18 who makes a powerful attack into Guilderland territory. A clear by Scott saves the day. The Dutchmen try to gain their composure and move the ball back into Shen territory for nearly 15 minutes but to no avail. Shen shoots several times on goal and defenders Segal, Scott and Burns deny each attempt. But the momentum seems to turn against the Dutchmen. Suddenly, the coach yells out in frustration summing up the proceedings: "they're winning every ball!!" Can the Dutchmen hold the lead? (The crowd ponders...if Shen scores we'll be faced with yet another overtime. At least the weather was better....) In the last 8 minutes of the game, however, the Dutchmen come alive, thanks to the speed of Nuanmin. A Cleary, Nuanmin, Rubin offensive sprint looks like a great opportunity but is denied by the keeper. The Dutchmen continue to press to the end with a Cleary- Nuanmin -Rubin combination followed by a Segal-Rubin- Nuanmin change up, but nothing seems to shake the Shen goalie.

The second half ends much like it began, with Weeden denying the Shen shot and saving the Dutchmen's 1-0 victory. Overtime averted at least for today....The Dutchmen have now gone nine straight without a loss and their record improves to 6-1-3.

## GAME 11:

### Dutchmen drop to Bethlehem

On a mild but grey day the Guilderland Freshmen went to Bethlehem for what should have been an easy win based on the past history. But the home court was an advantage and Bethlehem won 2-1.

The first half began with mile high kicks and tremendous saves by Kedrick in goal. Ben muscled on defense to hold back the Orange tide of strikers. The G'land offense looked strong as Jack C dribbled down the field followed by a Jack H to Rubin pass which looked for the goal but went out of bounds. Tyler begins the offensive attack again with a strong throw. Noah passes to Chris Cz. but is stopped. Bethlehem returns the offensive attack but is stopped by Alex B. The Dutchmen begin again with passing to the front of the goal but nothing finds the net and the ball is cleared by a Bethlehem high kick.

Suddenly the ball finds Connor R's feet in the far corner. With a one-two-three --left foot right foot combination he sends the ball squarely in front of the Bethlehem goal and finds Czekay's feet to the back of the net--GOAL!!! Play resumes but as Rubin tries to break away he is fouled. Nice kick but the six foot goalie has no problem catching it!!! The half ends with Guilderland leading 1-0.

The second half began with Bethlehem on the attack. Rubin to Czekay for a nice counter but the ball is stolen and taken into G'land territory. Alex and Zach fight hard to move the ball in the other direction. Tyler, Chris Cz. to Ben to Zack who is fouled. The opportunity is denied. As Bethlehem pushes hard on offense the Guilderland defense fights to hold the lead. A foul by the defense, the ref calls "shorts pulling", and the kick by Bethlehem is denied. Another save by Kedrick!! But the momentum has changed and the Dutchmen seem to have lost their usual focus. Frantic running to all sides of the field, no game plan, losing the ball, a fury in front of the box, to a Bethlehem foot and finds the back of the net. It's a tie game.

Okay. We've been here before--not a bad day for overtime...But the continued overall disorganization once again results in a break away, once again saved by Kedrick. Tensions rise as Bethlehem dominates for the next 5 minutes pressuring the goal. "Where are the Dutchmen?" They haven't had the ball in Bethlehem territory in over 5 minutes. The coach confirms the fans disbelief and yells "in 10 minutes we haven't been on the other side". Bethlehem scores again 2-1.

It's 5:20 PM--not much time--we need a change especially now since the Bethlehem goalie has the sun in his eyes. Now is our chance!!! Hanlon and Rubin come in--can they save the day? A foul results in another kick that is saved by Kedrick. Bethlehem charges back committed to saving their win but in the chaos at the goal Tyler is fouled hard. A collective sigh of relief is heard as he stands up and walks to the bench. The second half ends with fouls called left and right and continued spastic soccer. In one last attempt to save the game, a blast in front of the Bethlehem goal to Eric's feet but the sprawling attempt is denied.

Guilderland suffers defeat 2-1. All was shortly forgotten, however, at the team dinner party featuring Burger King fine fare!!!