

Thursday, March 5, 2009

MIDDLE PERIODS DECISIVE FOR EASTERN M-LACROSSE IN OPENING WIN

BABSON PARK, Mass. - In the pre-season, second-year head coach **Justin Axel** felt that this year's biggest improvement would be evident in the area of faceoffs.

Thursday's season-opener proved him prophetic.

Sophomore midfielder **Eric Vasil (Southington)** dominated the faceoff circle by winning 14 of 15 faceoffs and also picked up 14 ground balls and scored three goals to lead the Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team to a season-opening 15-8 win over Babson College at MacDowell Field.

It marked the first season-opening win since 2005 for Eastern, which defeated Babson (0-2) for the fourth straight year and eighth time in nine years.

Babson led 3-2 after the first quarter, and played the Warriors to a 4-4 stalemate in the fourth quarter. In between, Eastern completely dominated play. In those decisive middle two periods, the Warriors had advantages of 9-2 in goals, 30-12 in shots, 29-17 in ground balls and 9-2 in faceoffs. Over those 30 minutes, Eastern's experienced defense limited Babson to just four clears on 16 attempts.

Leading by one goal, Eastern erupted for eight unanswered goals to run away with a 13-4 lead three minutes into the final quarter. The Warriors scored the final four goals in the final three minutes of the first half to take a 9-4 lead into halftime. Seven different players either scored a goal or assisted during that four-goal run.

Vasil, who won 54.5 percent of his faceoffs as a freshman last season, won 14 of 15 faceoffs for the Warriors, recording 11 of his 14 ground balls on his own face-off victories. He also scored three goals on as many shots. Sophomore attack **Brian Fechtmann (Levittown, NY)** matched his classmate with three goals, while senior attack **Matt Savage (Southington)** tacked on one goal and three assists. Senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** and junior midfielder **Zach Malouf (Norwich)** each contributed two goals for Eastern, while senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** made 10 saves before departing in charge of a 12-4 lead early in the fourth quarter.

Every player in uniform saw action for the Warriors. Five Eastern newcomers recorded their first collegiate points: Midfielder **Kyle Bainton (North Attleboro, MA)** had a goal

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and assist, attack **Parker Geane (Easton)** and midfielder **Henry Peterson (West Hartford)** a goal each and attack **Michael Sullinger (Brookfield)** and first-year transfer midfielder **Michael Glennon (Walpole, MA)** one assist apiece. All but Glennon are freshmen.

A total of 22 penalties were whistled in the game. Eastern was 4-for-11 in extra-man opportunities and its man-down unit stopped seven of Babson's nine man-up tries. Three of the Warriors' man-up goals came during the seven-goal second period, with Fechtmann, Malouf and Simmons capitalizing on those extra-man situations.

In all, Eastern won 20 of 25 faceoffs.

After picking up 53 ground balls in last year's win over Babson, the Warriors collected 52 Thursday to out-pace Babson by 21 in that category. Senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)** followed Vasil with six ground balls, senior midfielder **Ben Raccio (Hamden)** adding four.

Babson was led by senior E.J. Peterson, who scored three goals, and senior Bryan Wilbur, who added three assists. Senior Max Owen started in net and made five saves in 28 minutes of action before giving way to sophomore Mike Saucier, who stopped nine shots in 32 minutes.

Eastern visits Montclair State University Saturday at 2 p.m.

Saturday, March 7, 2009

SIX-GOAL THIRD PERIOD LIFTS MSU OVER EASTERN M-LACROSSE
Red Hawks break open tight contest to register 14-8 non-conference decision

MONTCLAIR, N.J. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team gave up only one goal to Montclair State University leading scorer Tyler Meth, but four of his teammates combined for six goals that broke open a tight game late in the third quarter and carried the Red Hawks to a 14-8 non-conference victory Saturday afternoon at Sprague Field on the MSU campus.

Playing its second game in three days, Eastern (1-1) never led in the second half but trailed by only two goals, 8-6, after senior attack **Matt Savage's (Southington)** second goal with four minutes left in the third period. Montclair (3-1) owned the final 19 minutes, however, outscoring the Warriors 6-2 the rest of the way to post its third straight victory over Eastern after losing the first two contests in this series.

Meth, the Montclair leader with ten goals through the first three matches, managed only one goal on eight shots Saturday, but teammates Robert Simicola, Mike Corsetto, Matthew Prongay and Taylor Bonner combined to wrap six goals around the final minutes of the third period and first nine minutes of the fourth as Montclair pulled away.

Eastern's first four goals of the match gave it one-goal leads each time before Prongay and Meth scored in the final two minutes to provide the hosts with a 6-4 advantage at halftime. Eastern was never able to get any closer.

In Thursday's 15-8 season-opener win at Babson, Eastern shut out the Beavers in the third period which allowed the Warriors to carry an 11-4 lead into the final 15-minute session. Saturday, Montclair scored six times in the third period, then held Eastern scoreless in the fourth until less than a minute remained.

Sophomore attack **Brian Fechtmann (Levittown, NY)**, junior midfielder **Maxim Fantl (West Hartford)** and **Matt Savage (Southington)** each scored twice for Eastern. Fechtmann, who scored two goals in 14 matches as a freshman leads Eastern with five goals in two matches.

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Sophomore midfielder **Eric Vasil (Southington)** won 16 of 23 faceoffs against Montclair and is now 30-for-38 in two matches. He collected eight ground balls and senior defenseman Steve Lane (Groton) five. First-year junior **Michael Glennon (Walpole, MA)** contributed three assists on three of the team's first four goals. His pass set up senior midfielder **Ben Raccio (Hamden)** with five minutes left in the first half that gave Eastern its final lead, 4-3.

Bonner scored five goals on seven shots for Montclair, giving him nine strikes in four matches.

Eastern senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** was credited with ten saves while Montclair senior netminder Thomas Bowers had 13. Bowers was last year's ECAC Metro-South Goalie-of-the-Year for the Skyline Conference regular-season and playoff champions.

Eastern hosts Roger Williams University at Norwich Free Academy Saturday at noon.

Montclair State U. 14, Eastern Conn. 8

Eastern Conn. (1-1)	3	1	3	1	--	8
Montclair State (3-1)	2	4	6	2	--	14

Goals: E-Maxim Fantl 2, Matt Savage 2, Brian Fechtmann 2, Zach Malouf, Ben Raccio; M-Taylor Bonner 5, Robert Sinicola 3, Matthew Prongay 2, John Schiavone, Mike Corsetto, Tyler Meth, Anthony Dzienkiewicz.

Assists: E-Michael Glennon 3, DJ Simmons 2; M-Tyler Meixner 4, Mario Passafiume 2, Sinicola 2, Corsetto, Schiavone.

Shots: E-31, M-39; **Saves:** E-Kyle Savage 10, M-Thomas Bowers 13.

Saturday, March 14, 2009

EARLY FOURTH-PERIOD GOALS CARRY EASTERN M-LACROSSE
Warriors snap tie with three goals early in fourth quarter in 10-7 victory

NORWICH, Conn. The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team scored three unanswered goals in the first three minutes of the fourth quarter to snap a tie and went on to record a 10-7 non-conference win over Roger Williams University Saturday afternoon at Norwich Free Academy.

Roger Williams (2-1) got a man-up goal from senior Dave Hurley (Hanover, MA) 17 seconds into the fourth quarter to tie the match at 5-5 before Eastern (2-1) responded with three goals in less than three minutes to assume an 8-5 lead with just under 12 minutes left in the match.

Junior **Maxim Fantl (West Hartford)** netted his second goal of the match with a goal from the right side of the cage to give Eastern the lead for good, 6-5 with 13:30 left. Sophomore **Eric Vasil (Southington)** won the ensuing faceoff and fed senior **Matt Savage (Southington)** six seconds later to make it 7-5, and sophomore **Brian Fechtmann (Levittown, NY)** pushed the lead to 8-5 off a feed from Matt Savage with 11:45 remaining.

After scoring only two goals in the middle two periods, Eastern exploded for five in the final quarter, when the Hawks stayed close by scoring two of their three goals in the frame on extra-man opportunities.

Eastern remains unbeaten (5-0) in games played at Norwich Free Academy and remains undefeated (4-0) against Roger Williams in this series which dates back to 1997. It was the first meeting between the clubs in ten years.

Matt Savage led Eastern with two goals and two assists, all but one assist coming over the final 15 minutes. He also had five ground balls. Vasil won 15 of 17 faceoffs and picked up 12 ground balls. He has won 43 of 55 faceoffs this season.

Hurley improved his team-leading scoring total to 13 points by scoring four goals and assisting on another. He connected on four of his six shots in the match. Defensemen Glenn Pacitti (Mastic, NY) a junior, and senior Chris Mecozzi (Wilton) each had three ground balls to lead Roger Williams.

Eastern hosts Mount Ida College Wednesday at 4 p.m.

Eastern Conn. 10, Roger Williams U. 7

Roger Williams (2-1)	1	2	1	3	--	7
Eastern Conn. (2-1)	3	0	2	5	--	10

Goals: R-Dave Hurley 4, Jim Turenne, Drew Smith, Domenic Celeste; E-Zach Malouf 2, Matt Savage 2, Maxim Fantl 2, Brian Fechtmann 2, Michael Glennon, Eric Vasil.

Assists: R-Justin Leddy 2, Hurley, Smith; E-M. Savage 2, DJ Simmons 2, Michael Sullinger, Vasil.

Shots: R-27, E-43; **Saves:** R-Tyler Roebuck 19, E-Kyle Savage 13.

Wednesday, March 18, 2009

DEFENSE KEYS EASTERN MEN'S LACROSSE WIN OVER MOUNT IDA
Warriors shut down Mount Ida, coast to 14-7 win in Nevers Field opener

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – Keyed by its defense, the Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team allowed only four goals through the first three periods, then cleared the bench in the final quarter in coasting to a 14-7 victory over Mount Ida College Wednesday afternoon in its first match of the season on Thomas Nevers Field.

With its second win over Mount Ida (1-3) in the last two years, Eastern (3-1) improves its all-time record at Nevers Field to 84-7. The Warriors have given up only seven goals in each of two wins in the last five days.

Thirty-three uniform players saw action for the Warriors – including all three goalies -- with ten contributing a goal or assist and 13 picking up at least one ground ball.

Sophomore midfielder **Eric Vasil (Southington)** set the tone by winning ten of 12 faceoffs in the first half, helping Eastern take a 7-3 lead into the break. Eastern held Mount Ida to just one goal in each of the second and third periods and carried a 10-4 lead into the final 15 minutes.

Senior attack **Matthew Savage (Southington)** had three goals and three assists and junior attack **Vinny Tornatore (Norwalk)**, in his first start of the year, had three goals. Seven of his eight shots were on cage. Vasil won 16 of 21 faceoffs on the afternoon to improve his season percentage to .756 (59-of-78). He also sparked the Warriors to decisive 34-20 advantage in ground balls by picking up a team-high 13. Matthew Savage added five ground ball to go along with his six points. Behind senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)**, Eastern more than doubled the Mustangs' shot total. Simmons took a dozen shots – scoring two goals – and also corralled four ground balls.

Eastern never trailed and scored seven straight goals to break from a 3-3 tie in the opening minutes of the second quarter. Junior goalie Matt Vernik of Mount Ida made 21 saves to keep his team within range, but the Mustangs scored only two goals in a stretch of 34 minutes that sealed their fate.

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All three Eastern goalies saw action. Senior **Kyle Savage (Southington)** lowered his goals-against average to 8.27 by surrendering six goals over 52 minutes before giving way to freshman **Jamie Tommins (Fairfield)** and sophomore **Stephen Goomrigian (Norwalk)**.

Freshman attack **Michael Sullinger (Brookfield)** recorded his first collegiate goal four minutes into the final period on a feed from Matthew Savage.

Eastern visits defending national champion Salisbury University Saturday evening at 7 p.m.

Eastern Conn. 14, Mount Ida College 7

Mount Ida College (1-3)	2	1	1	3 --	7
Eastern Conn. (3-1)	2	5	3	4--	14

Goals: M-Brett Conley 3, Matthew Savage 2, Alex Champagne, Nate Prince; E-Vinny Tornatore 3, Matthew Savage 3, Maxim Fantl 2, DJ Simmons 2, Brian Fechtmann, Michael Sullinger, Lee Mascolo, Kyle Bainton.

Assists: M-Dan Harrington, Prince; E-Matt Savage 3, Fechtmann 2, Simmons, Eric Vasil, Steve Lane, Sullinger.

Shots: M-20, E-48; **Saves:** M-Matt Vernik 21 (14 goals allowed, 58:39 min.), Justin Famiglietti 0 (0, 1:21); E-Kyle Savage 8 (6 goals allowed, 52:05), Jamie Tommins 0 (1, 5:21), Stephen Goomrigian (0, 2:34).

Saturday, March 21, 2009

EASTERN M-LACROSSE IMPRESSIVE IN LOSS TO NO. 1 SALISBURY
Warriors give two-time defending champs toughest test of season in 15-7 setback

SALISBURY, Md. -- The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team matched No. 1-ranked and two-time defending national champion Salisbury University through the first eight goals of the game before the Sea Gulls eventually re-grouped for a 15-7 victory to post their 86th consecutive regular-season victory Saturday night

Eastern (3-2) recovered from an early 3-0 deficit to score four of the next five goals and pull even at 4-4 one minute into the second period. At that point, Salisbury (9-0) went on an 8-1 run that put them comfortably ahead, 12-5, midway through the third period.

The loss snaps a modest two-game winning streak for Eastern. Two-time defending national champion Salisbury extended its overall winning streak to 51, its home streak to 81, and its regular-season streak to 86. The Sea Gulls have not lost a regular-season game in six years.

Eastern senior keeper **Kyle Savage (Southington)** made a season-high 19 saves to backstop a defense which limited Salisbury 30-goal scorer Mike Cannone to one goal and which held the Sea Gulls off the board on six of seven man-up situations. Salisbury national Player-of-the-Year Kyler Berkman was held scoreless on seven shots. He managed to record his 20th and 21st assists of 2009. Sophomore faceoff specialist **Eric Vasil (Southington)** continued his faceoff dominance by winning 14 of 25 faceoffs and is now 73-for-103 this year. Vasil picked up a team-high ten ground balls.

The game marked the season debut of sophomore attack **Brendan Hoppey (Shoreham, NY)**, who had missed the first four games of the season with a hand injury. Hoppey, last year's Little East Conference Rookie-of-the-Year, contributed three assists. Senior attack **Matthew Savage (Southington)** and junior midfielder **Zach Malouf (Norwich)** each had two goals for Eastern. Senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** freed himself to take ten shots, but was able to put only one past Salisbury sophomore goalie Johnny Rodriguez. Simmons and senior defenseman **Mike Silvestrini (Guilford)** each collected four ground balls.

The Warriors converted a season-high three man-up goals (on eight attempts), sophomore attack **Brian Fechtmann (Levittown, NY)** using that extra-man opportunity to tie the score at 4-4 on a feed from Hoppey early in the second period.

Eastern was outshot 2-for-1, but the hosts managed only a 42-38 edge in ground balls.

The seven-goal margin was the second-closest match by an opponent this year against Salisbury, which was coming off 27-7 and 15-2 wins over Marymount (Va.) and Colorado College most recently.

Eastern opens Little East Conference play when it hosts the University of Southern Maine Saturday at 1 p.m.

little east conference

Saturday, March 28, 2009

EARLY EXPLOSION CARRIES EASTERN M-LACROSSE TO WIN
Warriors score first ten goals of match in opening defense of regular-season LEC title

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – Sixteen different players contributed to the offense and 38 players saw action as the Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team opened defense of last year's regular-season Little East Conference championship with a 17-5 victory over the University of Southern Maine Saturday afternoon at Thomas Nevers Field.

The match featured pre-season conference favorite Eastern (4-2, 1-0 little east) against a University of Southern Maine (3-3, 0-1 little east) team picked to finish eighth.

Eastern shut out the Huskies for the first 27+ minutes in rolling up a 10-0 lead. Twelve different players scored at least one goal and four contributed assists. Junior attack **Vinny Tornatore (Norwalk)** scored a career-high four goals in a little over one half of play. Freshman midfielder **John Carney (Seaford, NY)** scored his first career goal with eight minutes left. Making his first start of the year (second appearance), sophomore attack **Brendan Hoppey (Shoreham, NY)** scored his first goal of the season. Hoppey, last year's LEC Rookie-of-the-Year, missed the first four matches of the year due to a broken hand and had three assists in his first appearance of the season last Saturday off the bench at Salisbury University.

Already the program career record-holder in numerous categories, senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** moved to within two appearances of establishing a program career record in that category by playing the first half in net.

The Warriors picked up 49 ground balls in the match and won 15 of 24 faceoffs. Sophomore midfielder **Eric Vasil (Southington)** was 8-for-12 on faceoffs and scooped up a team-high nine ground balls. Senior defenseman **Mike Silvestrini (Guilford)** added six ground balls and senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)** four.

Kyle Savage made seven stops in the first half before giving way to freshman **Jamie Tommins (Fairfield)** and sophomore **Stephen Goomrigian (Norwalk)**, who wrapped up

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the win. Tommins mad four saves and Goomrigian turned back three shots over the final seven minutes.

Eastern visits Wheaton College Wednesday at 4 p.m. in a non-conference match.

Eastern Conn. 17, U. of Southern Maine 5

Southern Maine (3-3, 0-1 little east)	0	1	3	1	--	5
Eastern Conn. (4-2, 1-0 little east)	5	5	3	4	--	17

Goals: S-Preston Gilbert 3, Will Joy, Cason Carlson; E-Vinny Tornatore 4, DJ Simmons 2, Michael Sullinger 2, John Carney, Maxim Fantl, Brendan Hoppey, Eric Vasil, Zach Malouf, Ben Raccio, Michael Glennon, Brian Fechtmann, Kyle Bainton,

Assists: S-Marc Stannard; E-Matt Savage 3, Simmons 2, Parker Geane 2, Fechtmann 2, Salieu Bolivar, Lathrop, Vasil, Hoppey,

Shots: S-31, E-48.

Saves: S-James Suriyodorn 17, E-Kyle Savage 7 (1 goal allowed, 30:00 min.), Jamie Tommins 4 (22:40, 3), Stephen Goomrigian 3 (7:20, 1)

Wednesday, April 1, 2009

SIX-GOAL SECOND PERIOD CARRIES EASTERN M-LAX, 16-11
Warriors down Wheaton for ninth straight time, improve to 4-0 against NE opponents

NORTON, Mass. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men’s lacrosse team turned up the heat in the second period, scoring six goals and dominating all facets of the game on the way to a 16-11 non-conference victory over Wheaton College Wednesday afternoon at Mirrione Stadium.

Eastern (5-2) remains unbeaten this season against New England competition in four outings as it keeps Wheaton (0-6) winless. After losing the first game to the Lyons in this series, the Warriors have won the last nine.

Leading by a goal after the first 15-minute period, Eastern hit its stride in the second period. The Warriors won seven of nine faceoffs, were successful on six of seven clears, earned a 16-2 advantage in ground balls and outshot the hosts 16-9. The result was a 6-2 advantage in goals that provided the Warriors with a 10-5 halftime lead. In the first half, Eastern owned advantages of 30-10 in ground balls, 30-14 in shots, and 13-4 in faceoffs. The Warriors also failed to clear only one of 17 attempts over the first 30 minutes.

Leading 10-7 midway through the third period, Eastern scored the final goal of the period and the first four of the final period in a span of less than five minutes to pull away. Senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** score two of his team-leading four goals in that stretch, and senior **Matthew Savage (Southington)**, junior **Michael Glennon (Walpole, MA)** and sophomore **Brendan Hoppey (Shoreham, NY)** adding one each.

Beginning with Simmons’ goal that opened the second period, the Warriors outscored Wheaton 11-3 through the first five minutes of the fourth period.

Sophomore **Eric Vasil (Southington)** won 21 of 25 faceoffs and picked up 14 ground balls for Eastern. Vasil recorded his 100th faceoff win of the season in the match and improved his season percentage to .743 (101-for-136). His ground ball total equaled his career-high and leaves him eight shy of establishing a season record in that category.

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Hoppey had three goals and three assists to match Simmons' point total in the match.

Senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** made 14 stops over the first 56 minutes. The match was his 58th, tying the program record for goalies.

Wheaton's Chris Landers more than doubled his season total of four goals by scoring a game-high and career-best five.

Eastern hosts Plymouth State University in a Little East Conference match Saturday at 1p.m.

Eastern Conn. 16, Wheaton College (MA) 11

Eastern Conn. (5-2)	4	6	1	5	--	16
Wheaton College (0-6)	3	2	2	4	--	11

Goals: E-DJ Simmons 4, Brendan Hoppey 3, Matthew Savage 3, Zach Malouf 2, Eric Vasil, Michael Glennon, Pat Gority, Steve Lane; W-Chris Landers 5, Jeff Gomer 2, Drew Schaffer, Ben Cederberg, Billy McNamara, Conor Finn.

Assists: E-Hoppey 3, Maxim Fantl 2, Simmons 2, Vasil; W-Gomer 2, Cederberg, Landers, Schaffer, Tim Horan.

Shots: E-49, W-34; **Saves:** E-Kyle Savage 14 (9 goals allowed, 56:14), Jamie Tommins 3 (2, 3:46); W-Schuyler Horn 13.

little east conference

Saturday, April 4, 2009

EASTERN M-LACROSSE EXTENDS LEC STREAK IN 18-3 WIN
Kyle Savage, Vasil set records in Warriors' conference victory over Plymouth State

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team raced to a 10-1 halftime lead and cruised to an 18-3 Little East Conference victory over Plymouth State University Saturday afternoon at Thomas Nevers Field.

Ranked No. 12 in New England, Eastern (6-2, 2-0 little east) is unbeaten in 27 regular-season conference matches at Nevers Field since the inception of conference play in 2001. Plymouth (2-4, 1-1 little east) is the only conference team to defeat Eastern at Nevers Field, recording an overtime win in the semifinals of last year's LEC playoffs. The Panthers, who qualified for ECAC play last year after losing to Western Connecticut in the LEC title game, had a two-game winning streak stopped and falls to 3-17 all-time against the Warriors.

Eastern senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** took over as the program's all-time leader with his 59th career appearance. He made six saves over the first three periods to record his 36th career win – two shy of the program record. His saves move him to within five of becoming the 25th goalie in NCAA Division III history with as many as 700 in a career. Savage holds Eastern career records for appearances, starts, minutes and saves.

Sophomore midfielder **Eric Vasil (Southington)** won all 16 of his faceoffs to improve his season percentage .770. Vasil needed only eight matches to break the Eastern season ground ball record set by All-America Shannon Sligo in 2000. Vasil broke the record of 87 with his eighth of 13 ground balls in the game. He now has 93 ground balls this year for an average of 11.6 per game.

Seniors **Matthew Savage (Southington)** and **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** each scored four goals for Eastern, which outshot Plymouth 27-10 in building a 10-1 halftime lead. **Junior Maxim Fantl (West Hartford)** contributed a career-high four assists. Freshman long-stick midfielder **Tommy Flynn (Mincola, NY)** scored his first career goal to give

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Eastern a 3-0 lead with just under two minutes gone in the match.

Eastern hosts Trinity College Tuesday at 4 p.m. The Bantams are ranked ninth in New England.

Eastern Conn. 18, Plymouth State U. 3

Plymouth State (2-4, 1-1 little east)	1	0	0	2	--	3
Eastern Conn. (6-2, 2-0 little east)	6	4	5	3	--	18

Goals: P-Brian Giroux 2; Steve Engel; E- DJ Simmons 4, Matthew Savage 4, Brendan Hoppey 2, Zach Malouf 2, Parker Geane, Pat Gority, Eric Vasil, Lee Mascolo, Tommy Flynn, Vinny Tornatore.

Assists: P-Andrew Eriksen, Conor McCullough; E-Maxim Fantl 4, Geane, Gority, Hoppey, Henry Peterson.

Shots: P-21, E-48; **Saves:** P-Kevin Hayes 5 (6 goals allowed, 15:00 min.), Bill Morgan 6 (9, 30:00), Jack Tyo 2 (3, 15:00); E-Kyle Savage 6 (1 goal allowed, 45:00 min.), Jamie Tommins 0 (1, 7:48), Stephen Goomrigian 2 (1, 7:12).

Tuesday, April 7, 2009

TRINITY TURNS TABLES ON EASTERN M-LACROSSE IN 12-9 WIN

In game of streaks, visiting Bantams overcome Warriors' early five-goal lead

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – An early-game feast turned into a lengthy famine for the Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team, which couldn't maintain the momentum of an early five-goal lead in a 12-9 non-conference loss to Trinity College Tuesday afternoon at Thomas Nevers Field.

Ranked No. 11 in New England, Eastern (6-3) owned the first half, racing to a 6-1 lead and taking a 6-2 advantage into the lockerroom. The second half belonged to Trinity (8-3), however. The Bantams, ranked No. 6 in New England, shut the Warriors out on five shots in the third period, holding the hosts off the scoreboard for 25 minutes in erecting a 9-6 lead midway through the final period.

After Eastern's man-down unit killed off a two-man Trinity advantage in the final minutes of the first period, Eastern scored the first three goals of the second period as its lead ballooned to 6-1. After junior midfielder **Maxim Fantl (West Hartford)** give the Warriors a 4-1 lead four minutes into the second period, both teams' defenses dominated until senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)** and senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** scored 47 seconds apart in the final four minutes of the quarter to make it 6-1.

In the game, Eastern's man-down unit saw plenty of action, killing 11 of 14 of Trinity's extra-man opportunities. The Warriors spent 12 minutes and 30 seconds in the penalty box, while Trinity was whistled for only four penalties totaling three minutes.

Thirty-goal scorer Harper Cullen of Trinity was effectively contained by Eastern's defense – notably senior defenseman **Mike Silvestrini (Guilford)** – through the first half. Cullen managed only two shots in the first half – neither finding the cage. In the third period, however, the junior attackman finally broke through, scoring four times on six shots in the third period to spearhead Trinity's comeback.

Eastern sophomore faceoff specialist **Eric Vasil (Southington)**, ranked No. 2 nationally in faceoff percentage, won 16 of 24 faceoffs and corralled 12 ground balls to extend his season program record for ground balls to 105. Eastern senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** made ten saves in the game. His sixth save – coming in the first minutes of the third period – made him the 25th player in NCAA Division III lacrosse history with 700 career saves.

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The win for Trinity was its fourth straight over Eastern and allows the Bantams to tie the all-time series at 6-all.

A winner of its first two Little East Conference matches, Eastern visits Keene State College Saturday at 1 p.m. Both teams lost in the semifinals of last year's conference tournament, won by Western Connecticut State University.

Trinity College 12, Eastern Conn. 9

Trinity College (8-3)	1	1	5	5	--	12
Eastern Conn. (6-3)	3	3	0	3	--	9

Goals: T-Harper Cullen 4, Thomas Rogers 2, Zachary Trudeau 2; Rob Mountain, Andrew Williamson, Brad Hunnewell, Brendan Newland; E- DJ Simmons 3, Matthew Savage 2, Brendan Hoppey, Maxim Fantl, Steve Lane, Brian Fechtmann

Assists: T-Max Alderman 3, Connor Hustava 2, Art Schweitzer; E-Hoppey 3, Fantl 1.

Shots: T-33, E-31; **Saves:** T-Graham Fadden 13, E-Kyle Savage 10 (11 goals allowed, 59:36), Sean Leary 0 (1, 0:24).

little east conference

Saturday, April 11, 2009

EASTERN M-LACROSSE PUTS CLAMPS ON KEENE STATE, 14-10

Defense shuts out Owls for nearly 40 minutes; Warriors in sole possession of first in LEC

KEENE, N.H. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team shut out Keene State College for nearly 40 minutes, scoring 12 consecutive goals in the middle two quarters en route to a 14-10 Little East Conference victory in a first-place battle Saturday afternoon at Owl Stadium Complex.

The win for Eastern (7-3, 3-0 little east) over Keene State (4-3, 2-1 little east) on the Owls' field is its first after four straight losses dating back to 2005. The Warriors (five titles) and Keene (two) have combined to win seven of eight LEC playoff titles.

While Eastern seniors **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** and **Matthew Savage (Southington)** were combining for ten goals, the Warriors' defense was limiting Keene point leaders Griffin Meehan and Tony Santa Fe to a combined one goal and two assists. Santa Fe, last year's conference Offensive Player-of-the-Year, was shut out.

Keene scored half of its goal total in a span of six minutes in the first quarter before the Warriors reeled off 12 straight goals. Eastern did not allow a goal for 38:45, a stretch which gave them a 13-5 lead heading into the final 15-minute quarter.

Simmons and Savage each recorded their 100th career goal in the match, making them the 9th and 10th players in program history to reach that plateau. Simmons totaled career-highs with six goals and seven points, while Savage had four goals.

Simmons scored three goals in three minutes, the third one giving the Warriors their first lead, 6-5, six minutes into the second quarter. Eastern led 8-5 at halftime, but neither club was able to break through over the first six minutes of the second half. Simmons broke the standoff with an extra-man goal at that point, and Matthew Savage followed with three in a row over four minutes to push Eastern's lead to seven, 12-5, with four minutes left in the third period.

(more)

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“At halftime, we told them that the first seven minutes of the second half would be critical,” said second-year Eastern head coach **Justin Axel**. “We said that if we scored a couple of quick ones, instead of it being 8-5, it would be 10-5, and it would really be an uphill battle for (Keene).”

Keene scored five of the game’s final six goals, but two came inside the final 2-plus minutes.

Eastern senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)** marked Santa Fe tightly throughout most of the game, and also came up with a career-tying eight ground balls.

Axel praised the offensive play of Simmons (“Keene had no answer for him”) and the defensive performance of Lane, as well as the overall execution of the penalty-killing unit. The win was the second in as many tries under Axel for Eastern, which survived a triple-overtime 11-10 decision a year ago at Eastern.

Senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** made 17 saves – his second-highest total of the season behind the 19 he collected against defending national champion Salisbury University March 21. Eleven of his saves came when he shut out the hosts through the middle two periods. The win leaves Savage one shy of the career record for goalies, set by Mark Hayes earlier this decade.

After killing off 11 of its opponents’ 14 extra-man opportunities earlier this week against Trinity College, Eastern’s man-down unit blanked Keene on five tries after the Owls converted their first man-up try four minutes into the match. Eastern capitalized on three of its six extra-man opportunities, with Simmons and junior midfielder **Zach Malouf (Norwich)** scoring back-to-back extra-man goals that began the 12-0 scoring run.

For the first time in eight years of conference playoff competition last year, the championship match did not include Eastern or Keene or both. Both clubs were upset in the semifinals of the tournament, won for the first time by Western Connecticut. Last year’s regular-season champion, Eastern was rated No. 1 in this year’s pre-season coaches’ poll and was followed closely in the balloting by Keene.

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Tuesday, April 14, 2009

KYLE SAVAGE, VASIL SPARK M-LAX PAST UMASS DARTMOUTH, 10-7
After lackluster first half, Warriors break quickly in second for LEC win

NORTH DARTMOUTH, Mass. - The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team put a lackluster first half behind it by scoring three goals in 34 seconds at the outset of the third quarter and went on to a 10-7 Little East Conference victory over the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Tuesday afternoon at Cressy Field.

The win is the 11th straight in regular-season conference play for Eastern (8-3, 4-0 little east), last year's undefeated regular-season conference champion. The Warriors moved up two spots this week to No. 9 in the New England Division III poll.

After being shut out in the second quarter and trailing 3-2 at halftime, Eastern scored the first four goals of the third quarter. The first three came in the first 1:08 of the third quarter in a span of 34 seconds. Sophomore faceoff specialist **Eric Vasil (Southington)** - ranked first nationally in ground balls and second in faceoff percentage -- won the first three faceoffs of the third quarter, setting up those first three strikes. Senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** tied the game at 3-all by scoring the first goal of the second half with a one-handed shot 34 seconds into the third quarter. Vasil gained the ensuing draw and took it in himself ten seconds later to give the Warriors the lead for good, 4-3. Simmons picked up a ground ball when Vasil captured the next faceoff, and scored on a pass from **Matthew Savage (Southington)** to make it 5-3.

Senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** made a season-high 23 saves en route to his 38th career win between the pipes - equaling the most by any goalie in program history. Thirteen of his saves came in the middle two quarters. The only goals he allowed in that 30-minute stretch were a man-up marker by Josh Arsenaault with 4:32 left in the first half that gave UMass (5-6, 2-2 little east) its last lead at 3-2 and an even-strength goal by Arsenaault with 2:25 left in the third quarter that cut Eastern's lead to two.

With Eastern leading 6-4 after three quarters, the Warriors jumped quickly again in the final frame, tallying twice in the first four minutes and making it 9-5 midway through the

(more)

quarter. Simmons forced a turnover to set up the first goal of the quarter by Matthew Savage, sophomore attack **Brendan Hoppey (Shoreham, NY)** buried an extra-man goal on a pass from Vasil for the second goal, and junior midfielder **Zach Malouf (Norwich)** upped the lead to 9-4 with a goal on a feed from freshman midfielder Kyle Bainton (North Attleboro, MA) with 8:30 left in the contest.

UMass, which had a three-game win streak snapped, sent in two goals in the final two minutes to account for the final three-goal differential.

Senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)** - this past week's conference Defensive Player-of-the-Week, had seven ground balls, Simmons five and Matthew Savage four. Eastern hosts Massachusetts Boston Saturday at 1 p.m.

Eastern Conn. 10, UMass Dartmouth 7

Eastern Conn. (8-3, 4-0 little east) 2 0 4 4 -- 10
UMass Dartmouth (5-6, 2-2 little east) 2 1 1 3 -- 7

Goals: E-Vinny Tornatore 2, Matthew Savage 2, Brendan Hoppey 2, DJ Simmons 2, Eric Vasil, Zach Malouf; MD-Josh Arsenault 3, Mike Lee, Matt Leary, Bobby Young, Steve Colella.

Assists: E-Simmons 2, Maxim Fantl, Vasil, M. Savage, Kyle Bainton; MD-Leary, Andrew Foster, Nick Campbell.

Shots: E-41, MD-41; **Saves:** E-Kyle Savage 23, MD-Kevin Pelsinski 16.

Saturday, April 18, 2009

EASTERN M-LACROSSE A STEP CLOSER TO SEVENTH LEC TITLE

Warriors remain unbeaten (27-0) vs. LEC opponents in regular season at Nevers Field

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Eastern Connecticut State University moved a step closer to its seventh unbeaten Little East Conference regular season men's lacrosse championship in nine years by routing the University of Massachusetts Boston, 20-7, Saturday afternoon for its 27th consecutive regular-season conference win at Thomas Nevers Field.

Having gone undefeated in winning six of eight LEC regular-season titles, Eastern (9-3, 5-0 little east) needs one win in its final two conference regular-season conference matches to nail down at least a share of the regular-season title, and with it, the No. 1 seed in the conference playoffs which begin a week from Tuesday with first-round matches.

Senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** became the program's all-time winningest goalie with his 39th career victory. Savage, who has compiled a 39-24 record in 63 career matches, played the first 23 minutes and left the game with a 13-2 lead. Savage has started every possible match and earned every possible decision in his four-year career.

Eastern sophomore **Eric Vasil (Southington)**, ranked first nationally in ground balls and sixth in faceoff winning percentage, won 10 of 12 faceoffs and picked up five ground balls. In 12 matches, Vasil has won 162 of 227 faceoffs for a .714 percentage and has totaled a season-record 130 ground balls (10.8 per game). Senior midfielder **Will Lathrop (Plantsville)** also dominated in the faceoff circle by winning 15 of 16. The Warriors won 27 of 31 faceoffs in the game and the man-down until successfully killed off seven UMass extra-man situations.

Vasil and Lathrop each corralled five ground balls, with senior midfielder **Ben Raccio (Hamden)** freshman long-stick midfielder **Tommy Flynn (Mineola, NY)** each picking up four of Eastern's game total of 44 ground balls.

Freshman midfielder **Salieu Bolivar (Norwalk)** was credited with his first collegiate goal with an unassisted strike with nine minutes left in the second quarter.

Eastern plays its only back-to-back matches this year when it hosts Rochester Tech Sunday at 1 p.m. The Tigers (8-4) received votes in the most recent USILA Division III national poll.

(more)

Eastern Conn. 20, Massachusetts Boston 7

UMass Boston (1-9, 0-5 little east)	2	0	3	2	--	7
Eastern Conn. (9-3, 5-0 little east)	9	8	0	3	--	20

Goals: MB-Al Craven 4, Peter Kovach 2, Eric Collins; E-Vinny Tornatore 4, Matthew Savage 3, DJ Simmons 3, Brendan Hoppey 2, Kyle Bainton 2, Eric Vasil, Salieu Bolivar, Pat Gority, Michael Sullinger, Zach Malouf, Lee Mascolo.

Assists: MB-John Canty 2, Dale Nunn; E-Vasil 3, Hoppey 2, Matthew Savage 2, Salieu Bolivar, Gority, Henry Peterson, Ben Raccio, Sullinger, Tornatore.

Shots: MB-23, E-36; **Saves:** MB-Aaron Pollock 9; E-Kyle Savage 0 (2 goals allowed, 23:20), Jamie Tommins 1 (3, 21:40), Stephen Goomrigian 1 (2, 15:00).

Sunday, April 19, 2009

EASTERN M-LACROSSE HOLDS OFF RIT'S LATE CHARGE IN 13-12 WIN
Warriors have just enough to hold on in non-conference match against Tigers

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team built a six-goal lead through three quarters and held on to post a 13-12 non-conference victory over Rochester Tech Sunday afternoon at Thomas Nevers Field.

Eastern (10-3), which had lost to Rochester Tech (8-5) by 21 goals three years ago, has won four straight. Rochester Tech (8-5) had won two in a row and three of four entering the match.

Eastern took the lead for good with 65 seconds left in the first quarter and carried a six-goal lead into the final quarter before the Tigers made a late charge that left them one goal shy. RIT kept the Warriors off the board after **Mathew Savage's (Southington)** fourth goal of the match with 11 minutes left pushed Eastern's lead to 13-7. Rochester scored the final five goals of the match, cutting the gap to the final one-goal margin with 51 seconds left. Eastern sophomore **Eric Vasil (Southington)** won the ensuing faceoff -- his 20th in 29 tries on the afternoon -- and the Tigers were whistled for a slashing penalty eight seconds later and with the help of an extra-man opportunity, the Warriors were able to run out the clock.

After the visitors scored the first two goals of the match, Eastern ran off six of the next seven to take a 6-3 lead one minute into the second quarter. Four of the goals came in a span of two minutes late in the first quarter. With Eastern leading 4-3 after one quarter, junior attackman **Vinnie Tornatore (Norwalk)** scored off the second-quarter faceoff on a feed from Matthew Savage, and junior midfielder **Zach Malouf (Norwich)** connected for his only goal 62 seconds later on a pass from junior midfielder **Maxim Fantl (West Hartford)** that gave Eastern a 6-3 lead.

Rochester was able to stage its fourth-quarter comeback despite losing six of eight faceoffs to Vasil, who entered the week ranked sixth in faceoff percentage and first in ground balls. Vasil had a career-high 18 ground balls in the match. In 13 games, he has collected 148 ground balls -- 51 more than the previous season record -- and has won 71.1 percent of his 256 faceoffs.

In addition to his game-leading total of four goals, Matthew Savage also set up three goals with assists and picked up six of the team's 54 ground balls. Senior defenseman **Mike Silvestrini (Guilford)** had five ground balls and senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)** four.

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Eastern senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** made 18 saves - 11 in the second half – to post his 40th career win. Savage became the winningest goalie in program history Saturday in a 20-7 win over visiting UMass Boston.

Rochester was an ECAC tournament qualifier last year and received votes in this past week’s national poll. Eastern’s defense was able to limit the Tigers’ top three season goal leaders to a combined three goals. Freshman attack AJ Tingle led the Tigers with three goals, two coming in the final nine minutes. Junior defenseman Dan MacRae picked up nine ground balls to lead Rochester, with sophomore long-stick midfielder MJ Kiekebelt and junior midfielder Adam Lehmann collecting six each.

Eastern visits Western Connecticut State University in a Little East Conference match Tuesday at 4 p.m.

Eastern Conn. 13, Rochester Tech 12

Rochester Tech (8-5)	3	1	2	6	--	12
Eastern Conn. (10-3)	4	4	4	1	--	13

Goals: R-AJ Tingle 3, David Burke 2, Adam Lehmann 2, Eric Bressler, Adam Vlassis, Tyler Russell, Sean Gillies, Christopher Cherami; E-Matthew Savage 4, Vinnie Tornatore 2, DJ Simmons 2, Eric Vasil, Brian Fechtmann, Ben Raccio, Maxim Fantl, Zach Malouf.

Assists: R-Dan MacRae, Vlassis, Gillies, Bressler; E- M. Savage 3, Fechtmann 2, Fantl 2, Mike Silvestrini, Brendan Hoppey, Malouf.

Shots: R-53, E-30. **Saves:** R-Robert Tonnessen 5 (8 goals allowed, 30:00 min.), Kevin Rattigan 6 (5, 30:00).; E-Kyle Savage 18.

Tuesday, April 21, 2009

WITH WIN, EASTERN M-LACROSSE GAINS LEC's TOP SEED
Warriors pull away from 2008 champion Western Connecticut, clinch share of title

DANBURY, Conn. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team broke open a tight game by scoring five straight goals on the way to a 21-10 Little East Conference victory over 2008 champion Western Connecticut State University that clinched the No. 1 seed for the Warriors in the upcoming conference playoffs.

A winner of five straight matches this year and 13 consecutive LEC regular-season games over a three-year span, Eastern (11-3) can clinch its seventh unbeaten outright conference championship in nine seasons Saturday with a win over visiting Salem State College when the teams meet in the regular-season finale. Eastern will host a playoff semifinal-round match Thursday, April 30 at Thomas Nevers Field.

The win is the third in the last four days for Eastern, which scored the final five goals of the second quarter – five different players contributing to the run -- to erase a one-goal deficit and bring an 11-7 lead into the lockerroom. The Warriors outscored Western (3-11, 1-5 little east) 15-3 over the final two-plus quarters of the game.

Senior attack **Matthew Savage (Southington)** collected a career-high nine points with five goals and four assists, with junior midfielder **Zach Malouf (Norwich)** adding a career-high four goals and senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** adding four. Sophomore attack **Brendan Hoppey (Shoreham, NY)** contributed two goals and three assists.

Eastern cashed in with a season-high total of five extra-man goals in the game. Simmons had three, Matthew Savage and Hoppey one each. Senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** made 11 saves to extend his program career record with his 41st victory.

Sophomore midfielder **Eric Vasil (Southington)**, ranked first in Division III in ground balls per game (11.4) and sixth in faceoff percentage (.711), won 19 of 30 tries. His 18th win made him the fourth player in program history with as many as 200 in a season. Vasil, who has already doubled the previous season record for ground balls with 165, also had 17 ground balls (one shy of his season high set Sunday against RIT) to improve his national average to 11.8.

Senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)** had four ground balls to move into third place all-time with 250 – one ahead of Pat Ammendolia. All-America Shannon Sligo is the all-time leader, with 282.

Western had won its first LEC playoff title a year ago, eliminating No. 2 seed Keene State College in the semifinals as the No. 3 seed and downing No. 5 seed Plymouth State in the final.

Saturday, April 25, 2009

EASTERN BLASTS SALEM STATE TO FINISH LEC SEASON UNBEATEN
Top-seeded Warriors record seventh perfect conference season in nine years

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team closed out its seventh perfect Little East Conference season in nine years of championship play with a 17-3 verdict over Salem State College Saturday on Seniors' Day at Thomas Nevers Field.

Eastern (12-3, 7-0 little east) finished unbeaten in the LEC regular season for the second straight season and has now won 14 straight conference regular-season matches dating back to the final regular-season contest of 2007. The Warriors are 8-0 all-time against Salem State (6-9, 2-5 little east), which re-joined the conference this year after a five-year hiatus. The Vikings re-gained varsity status last year after four seasons on the club level.

Having clinched the playoffs' No. 1 seed during the week with a win over Western Connecticut, Eastern will host a playoff semifinal-round game Thursday against the winner of a Tuesday first-round game between No. 4 Plymouth State and No. 5 UMass Dartmouth. Salem is the No. 6 and final seed and will play a first-round road playoff game Tuesday at No. 3 U. of Southern Maine.

Every player in uniform saw action for Eastern, with 15 different players contributing a goal or assist and 19 picking up at least one ground ball. Sophomore midfielder **Eric Vasil (Southington)**, the national ground ball leader, picked up seven ground balls by winning seven of eight faceoffs to improve his season faceoff percentage to .707 – sixth best in Division III. Senior attack **Matthew Savage's (Southington)** third of three goals in the game was his 40th of the season.

Eastern's defense limited Salem to just one goal on 13 shots after the first quarter.

Eastern's special teams recorded six goals – four in man-up and two in man-down situations. In a five-goal first quarter, sophomore attack **Brian Fechtmann (Levittown, NY)** and senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)** both scored short-handed goals and senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** added a man-up strike.

Eastern remained undefeated all-time in 30 regular-season conference games at Thomas Nevers Field.

Eastern Conn. 17, Salem State College 3

Salem State (6-9, 2-5 little east)	2	0	0	1	-- 3
Eastern Conn. (12-3, 7-0 little east)	5	4	2	6	-- 17

Goals: S-Jonathan Falls 2, Padriac Boscoe. E- DJ Simmons 4. Matthew Savage 3, Brian Fechtmann 2, Vinny Tornatore 2, Eric Vasil, Steve Lane, Michael Glennon, Michael Sullinger, Parker Geane, John Carney.

Assists: S-Robert Mulroy. E- Simmons 2, John Epley, Maxim Fantl, Brendan Hoppey, Lane, Will Lathrop, Zach Malouf, M. Savage, Vasil.

Shots: S-17, E-53. **Saves:** S-Brendan Gill 24 (10 goals allowed, 55:15 min.), Rick Melanson 0 (1, 4:45); E- Kyle Savage 8 (2 goals allowed, 40:00 min.), Jamie Tommins 0 (1, 6:00), Stephen Goomrigian 0 (0, 5:00).

Thursday, April 30, 2009

EASTERN M-LACROSSE MOVES INTO EIGHTH LEC FINAL
Top-seeded Warriors have enough to subdue Plymouth State, 10-5

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – The top-seeded Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team limited fourth-seeded Plymouth State University to just 18 shots and allowed the Panthers only three extra-man opportunities in a 10-5 win in the semifinals of the 2009 Little East Conference playoffs Thursday afternoon at Thomas Nevers Field.

With the win, Eastern (13-3) moves into the LEC championship game for the eighth time in nine years and will host second-seeded Keene State College. The Owls eliminated third-seeded University of Southern Maine, 16-4, Thursday at Keene, NH.

Eastern shut out Plymouth in two of four quarters and held a 47-18 advantage in shots, but needed a strong fourth quarter to pull away. Plymouth managed only four shots in the first half but rebounded in the third quarter, outscoring Eastern 3-1 to make it a one-goal game heading into the final quarter. The Warriors outshot the Pantherse 15-3 in the final quarter, shutting out the visitors and getting goals from juniors **Maxim Fantl (West Hartford)** and **Zach Malouf (Norwich)**, sophomore **Brian Fechtmann (Levittown, NY)** and senior **Matthew Savage (Southington)** and two assists from sophomore **Brendan Hoppey (Shoreham, NY)** to secure the win. Fantl scored on Eastern's first possession off the fourth-quarter faceoff – beating Plymouth sophomore goalie Kevin Hayes (Beverly, MA) from the right of the cage with a low shot into the left corner. Malouf capitalized with the team's second extra-man goal less than five minutes later to make it 8-5, and Fechtmann followed less than a minute later on a pass from senior Ben Raccio (Hamden).

Averaging over eight penalties a game in the regular season, Eastern was whistled for only four penalties which gave Plymouth only three man-up tries. The Warriors held Plymouth scoreless while being two men down for 30 seconds late in the second quarter.

Eastern sophomore **Eric Vasil (Southington)**, ranked first nationally in ground balls (11.47 per game) and third in faceoff winning percentage (.706), won 17 of 19 faceoffs and retrieved 14 ground balls. After winning all 16 of his faceoffs in a 19-3 regular-season win over Plymouth, Vasil won his first nine tries Thursday.

Matthew Savage scored four of Eastern's goals. Three of his goals came in the second quarter when the Warriors took the lead for good. Savage tallied goals two minutes apart to tie the game and provide Eastern with the lead for good four minutes into the second quarter.

Hayes made 23 saves in net for Plymouth and combined with defensemen Tim Nicholson (Franklin, MA) and Logan Irish (Somers, CT) for 13 of the Panthers' 25 ground balls.

(more)

The win avenges the team's only conference home loss ever. Plymouth emerged with an overtime victory over the top-seeded Warriors in last year's semifinals before losing to Western Connecticut State University in the final.

Eastern and Keene will meet in the playoff final for the sixth time in seven years. Eastern has won three of the five, all of the victories coming at Nevers Field.

Eastern Conn. 10, Plymouth State U. 5

Plymouth State (7-8)	2	0	3	0	--	5
Eastern Conn. (13-3)	1	4	1	4	--	10

Goals: P-Andrew Eriksen 2, Brian Giroux, Steve Engel, Dan Maiorana;
E- Matthew Savage 4, Zach Malouf 2, DJ Simmons 2, Maxim Fantl, Brian Fechtmann,
Assists: Giroux, Conor McCullough; E-Brendan Hoppey 2, Michael Glennon, Steve Lane,
Malouf, Ben Raccio.
Shots: P-18, E-47; **Saves:** P-Kevin Hayes 23, E-Kyle Savage 5.

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

EASTERN M-LACROSSE SURVIVES NCAA TOURNEY OPENER

Warriors emerge from overtime to post first-ever NCAA tournament victory 10-9

KINGS POINTS, N.Y. -- Senior attack **Matthew Savage (Southington)** forced overtime, senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** saved overtime, and senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** decided overtime as the Eastern Connecticut State University men's lacrosse team posted its first-ever win in the NCAA Division III tournament with a 10-9 overtime victory over the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Wednesday night at Brooks Stadium.

Matthew Savage's team-leading 52nd goal of the year with 34.6 seconds left in regulation sent the game into overtime. Kyle Savage kept the season alive with a save in the opening minute of sudden death, and Little East Conference Offensive Player-of-the-Year Simmons ended the game 82 seconds into the extra session with an unassisted goal that sent the Warriors into the second round for the first time in six NCAA tournament appearances.

Eastern (15-3), which ties the program record for wins, visits Wesleyan University Saturday at 1 p.m. in the round of 16. Wesleyan (14-3) drew a first-round bye after gaining the automatic bid extended the New England Small College Athletic Conference playoff champion. Eastern won its sixth Little East Conference title in nine years this past Saturday with a 12-8 win over visiting Keene State College.

Eastern led six times in the match but only once by as many as two goals. After Simmons' extra-man strike with six minutes left in the third quarter gave the Warriors a 7-6 lead, Eastern went scoreless and trailed by a goal until junior midfielder **Zach Malouf (Norwich)** potted his only goal on an assist from sophomore attack **Brendan Hoppey (Shoreham, NY)** with just over six minutes left in regulation.

Zach Gray's only goal of the match on an assist from Adam Jerlow gave Merchant Marine (11-6) only its second lead of the night with 65 seconds left, but Eastern sophomore faceoff specialist **Eric Vasil (Southington)** won the ensuing faceoff and Matthew Savage scored his third goal of the match on a pass from junior midfielder **Maxim Fantl (West Hartford)** 30 seconds later to send the game into overtime.

(more)

Ranked first nationally in ground balls and third in faceoff percentage. Vastil won 19 of 22 faceoffs and scooped up 17 ground balls. Vasil won 17 straight attempts after losing three of five in the first quarter.

Simmons led Eastern with five goals -- two coming in man-up opportunities in the third quarter and Hoppey had both of the team's assists. Eastern's man-down unit killed seven of eight penalties. In the final 1:47 of the third quarter, Eastern was flagged four times, but the Mariners were unable to take advantage of the extra-man tries. The hosts were up two men for 30 seconds in that late third-quarter stretch.

Kyle Savage stopped 15 shots, six of them coming in the first quarter when the Mariners outshot Eastern, 16-4. His biggest one came in overtime and prolonged the careers of nine seniors.

little east conference

Saturday, May 9, 2009

THREE LATE WESLEYAN GOALS SINK EASTERN M-LACROSSE, 8-4
In NCAA tournament, Cardinals finally shake Warriors to advance to quarters

MIDDLETOWN, Conn. – John Killee, Russ Follansbee and Jeff Strittmatter scored goals in the final five minutes as the Wesleyan University men's lacrosse team was finally able to shake Eastern Connecticut State University and post an 8-4 win in the second round of the NCAA Division III tournament Saturday afternoon at Jackson Field on the Wesleyan campus.

Senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)**, whose overtime goal Wednesday sent Eastern (15-4) into the second round, scored the only goal of the third quarter to tie the game at 4-4 with eight minutes left in the frame. Ranked 17th nationally and first in New England, Wesleyan (15-3) finally broke a 20-minute drought against Eastern senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** 65 seconds into the fourth quarter on a goal by NESCAC Rookie-of-the-Year John Froats that bounced into the net. The Warriors, ranked seventh in New England, unloaded four shots over the next three minutes – with junior midfielder **Maxim Fantl (West Hartford)** hitting the post once and Wesleyan senior goalie Mike Borrero saving one – before the hosts scored three times in a span of 2:31 to pull away.

With its first win over Eastern in the last five meetings, Wesleyan advances to the national quarterfinals on Wednesday, when it hosts New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) rival Middlebury College. Seeded fourth in the NESCAC tournament, Wesleyan knocked the Panthers out in the semifinals on the way to the tournament title.

In a game dominated by defense, neither team was able to score more than two consecutive goals until the final minutes of the fourth quarter. With Eastern trailing 4-2, senior attack **Matthew Savage (Southington)** cut the deficit in half with his 53rd goal of the year on a feed from sophomore **Brendan Hoppey (Shoreham, NY)** with two minutes left in the third quarter. Neither team was able to break through in the third quarter until Simmons cashed in a Wesleyan turnover for his 49th goal of the year with 8:15 left in the third quarter.

(more)

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Follansbee, Wesleyan's top goal-scorer with 44 goals, was held to one goal in three different quarters by Eastern senior defenseman **Steve Lane (Groton)**, despite uncorking ten of his team's 44 shots. Sophomore faceoff specialist **Eric Vasil (Southington)** won nine of 14 faceoffs and picked up ten ground balls. Vasil is ranked first nationally in ground balls and third in faceoff winning percentage. He concluded the season with program season records for ground balls (221), faceoff percentage (.714), wins (264) and attempts (370).

Kyle Savage made 16 saves in one of the top games of his career. After allowing three goals in the first quarter, he surrendered only one goal through the middle periods before Froats was credited with the go-ahead goal when the loose ball caromed into the net early in the fourth quarter.

Matthew Savage finished the season with a program-record 53 goals. He had at least one goal in his final 13 matches, and Simmons concluded by recording at least one goal in his last 16 contest.

Eastern had a nine-game winning streak snapped with the loss, with three of its losses this year coming against teams which qualified for NCAA play.

Wesleyan U. 8, Eastern Conn. 4

Eastern Conn. (15-4)	2	1	1	0	--	4
Wesleyan U. (15-3)	3	1	0	4	--	8

Goals: E-Matthew Savage, DJ Simmons, Vinny Tornatore, Brian Fechtmann.; W-Russ Follansbee 3, Jon Killeen 2, Jason Ben-Eliyahu, John Froats, Jeff Strittmatter.

Assists: E-Brendan Hoppey, M. Savage; W- Ben-Eliyahu, Lonny Blumenthal, Dan Latzman.

Shots: E-26, W-44; **Saves:** E- Kyle Savage 16, W-Mike Borrero 11.

Saturday, May 2, 2009

EASTERN M-LAX RE-GAINS LITTLE EAST CHAMPIONSHIP

After two-year hiatus, Warriors gain sixth title in nine years with 12-8 victory

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – One year after failing to qualify for the Little East Conference men's lacrosse championship match for the only time, Eastern Connecticut State University returned to the top Saturday with a 12-8 victory over Keene State College before an overflow crowd at Thomas Nevers Field.

Top-seeded Eastern (14-3) won its sixth Little East Conference playoff championship in nine years by rolling to its eighth straight win and snapping the six-game streak of second-seeded Keene (9-4). The teams were meeting in the final sixth time in the last seven years, with the Warriors winning for the fourth time. For the first time ever, neither Eastern nor Keene advanced to the final last year, both being upset in the semifinals.

The LEC playoff title was the first for the Warriors under second-year head coach **Justin Axel**, who has directed the Warriors to the second-most overall wins in program history. All four head coaches in the program's history have now won at least one LEC playoff championship.

For Eastern's four-year seniors, it was their first LEC playoff title since their freshman seasons.

"I could not be happier for our group of seniors," stated Axel. "They have done so much to bring the program back to the top of the Little East Conference, and I cannot thank them enough. The change in the team's mindset and work ethic is a tribute to the hard work and effort that these young men have displayed since I arrived. This is truly a special group."

With the win, Eastern qualifies automatically for its sixth NCAA post-season tournament, first since downing Keene 14-12 in the 2006 championship game at Nevers Field.

It marked the team's second four-goal win over Keene this year in this rivalry which has become one of the top ones in New England.

"This was a great game that continues to add to the rivalry between Eastern and Keene," pointed out Axel. "I give a lot of credit to Keene. They played an excellent game and it took a full 60 minute effort for us to come out on top."

Senior attack **Matthew Savage (Southington)** was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player, following up his four-goal effort in Thursday's semifinal win over Plymouth State with five more against Keene. En route to his MOP honor, Savage broke the program season record with his final goal of the match. Savage's 49th goal of the season came with 5:41 left and broke the Owls' back. It was the team's third straight and lifted it into an insurmountable four-goal lead, 11-7.

(more)

Eastern's defense was able to shut down two of Keene's top two offensive threats. The Warriors limited Keene season goal leader Griffin Meehan to just one goal – that coming 18 minutes into the game – and prevented Keene assist leader Tony Santa Fe from chalking up even one helper.

Matthew Savage scored twice in 15 seconds to pull Eastern even at 3-all six minutes into the second quarter and late contributed one of the team's four straight goals that closed the second quarter and gave the Warriors a 7-4 halftime lead. The Owls got to within a goal twice thereafter before senior midfielder **DJ Simmons (Mystic)** scored an unassisted goal with 16 seconds left in the third quarter, and Matthew Savage scored two straight unassisted goals to make it 11-7 with six minutes left.

"Matt has really played incredibly in the last few weeks," noted Axel of Savage, who has averaged nearly four goals a game over the last eight games, beginning with a four-goal effort in the 14-10 regular-season win over Keene April 11. "I couldn't be happier for him in breaking the single-season goal record, as he truly deserves the accolade. Anytime we needed a goal against Keene, he found a way to find the back of the net. His leadership and determination has truly shown over the last few games."

Since having his program-record streak for consecutive goals snapped at 22 March 28, Savage has scored at least two goals in the team's last 11 games.

Sophomore faceoff specialist **Eric Vasil (Southington)** rebounded from his worst faceoff performance of the season in the team's regular-season win over Keene (6-of-21) by taking 11 of 21 faceoffs. The national leader in ground balls, Vasil commanded eight Saturday. Keene's Casey Broderson, who won 14 of 17 tries at the "X" in earlier this year, lost six of seven this time around.

Eastern senior goalie **Kyle Savage (Southington)** – twin brother of Matthew -- made 12 saves to record his 44th career win and pull to within two stops of 800 in his 68-game career.

Eastern's 14 wins equal the third-most in a season for Eastern and are the most since 2001.

Eastern Conn. 12, Keene State College 8

Keene State (9-4)	1	3	3	1	--	8
Eastern Conn. (14-3)	1	6	2	3	--	12

Goals: E-Casey Broderson 2, Tony Santa Fe 2; Griffin Meehan, Rodney Arganese, Michael Araujo, Dax Greene; E- Matthew Savage 5, Maxim Fantl 2, DJ Simmons 2; Brendan Hoppey 2, Vinny Tornatore.

Assists: K-Riley Benson, Broderson, Meehan; E-Fantl, Zach Malouf, M. Savage.

Shots: K-42, E-32; **Saves:** K-Alex Corliss 9, E-Kyle Savage 12.