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## Westborough 18, Nipmuc 3: Rangers girls lacrosse team a group of early risers

Within the first few minutes of Friday's non-league matchup at Nipmuc, visiting Westborough established a tone for how the remainder of the game would be played. After scoring five goals in the first four minutes of action, the Rangers went on to tack on a dozen more to thump the Warriors, 18-3.

UPTON — Throughout the start of this season, the Westborough High girls lacrosse team has made a habit of creating early leads, consistently taking control of games from the very first faceoff.

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"We want to do that, we want to take charge of the game," Westborough coach Colleen Debish said after her team improved to 6-0. "The kids have a great passion and want to do their very best, I'm always happy with their effort and the way they hustle — I couldn't ask for more. Today we were able to practice a few things we had been working on once we had a comfortable lead, too."

In all, eight different players netted goals for Westborough, with Sarah Bracey pacing the team's big offensive day with four of her own. Nicole Foster and Olivia Weckwerth each added hat tricks, while Sabrina Goebel, Brittany Chapin, and Olivia Harwood all netted a pair of goals to go with lone scores from Emily Desmond and Samantha Weckwerth.

Bracey helped spark the Rangers' dominating start, as she beat Nipmuc goalie Katie Friberg for goals on Westborough's first two shots of the game. After assisting on Bracey's second goal, Harwood netted her first goal when she beat Friberg top shelf to give the Rangers a 3-0 lead only 2:46 into the game.

"We go into every game and never underestimate the other team," Bracey said. "We like to have the mindset that every team is a big challenge and that's we try our best at the beginning of each game."

Aryane Schiavo put Nipmuc (2-5) on the board with 8:21 remaining in the first half when she beat Westborough starting goalie Julia McKay with a goal at the top of the net. While McKay stopped the Warriors' first shot of the game, she allowed the third — and final — shot she faced to go into the net, as Maggie Moss netted Nipmuc's second goal with 45 seconds left when she bounced one past McKay off of a penalty shot.

After Westborough took an 11-2 lead at halftime, the Warriors challenged Rangers backup goalie Kayleigh Wright with three more shots in the second half. Nipmuc's struggles continued in the second frame, though, as the team was held scoreless until Moss added her second goal of the game with 4:37 remaining.

"They're always going to be a tough team to beat," Nipmuc coach Chris Hadfield said. "I tell our girls to learn from them rather than get discouraged. We just wanted to do our best to make them work hard throughout the game."

The Rangers padded onto their lead in the second half, as Harwood scored her second and Chapin netted both her goals in the frame. Friberg made three of her five saves in the final 25 minutes of play.

Although Friday's win demonstrated just how many Westborough players are capable of scoring goals, it also showed how those same offensive-minded scorers maintain focus when it comes to preventing opponents from attacking the Rangers' net.

"Our attack is very strong," Olivia Weckwerth said. "As a whole, our attack can play defense, our midfielders are great at defense, and our defensive unit is great. Our goalies are our heart in the net — today they only allowed three goals — that speaks a lot to how committed the team is and how well we're able to jell."



PHOTO/ DAILY NEWS STAFF PHOTO / ALLAN JUNG

Westborough captain Sabrina Goebel passes Nipmuc's Julia Salvagio on her way to scoring a goal during a girls lacrosse game at Nipmuc Regional High School in Upton.

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