

Wilson's shot at state title, perfect season lost in OT

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- LANSDALE - Wilson was just one game away from perfection and a state girls water polo championship.

Unfortunately for the Bulldogs, they had to face a motivated home team.

Host North Penn tied it in the final 12 seconds of regulation then scored twice in overtime to upset Wilson 8-7 Saturday night and win its second consecutive state title.

The Bulldogs end their season at 27-1.

"We knew this was going to be a close game and it wasn't going to be easy going in," said Wilson coach Peggy Shaner, named the state Coach of the Year. "We had to play our best game. Bill (Bartle) is a heck of a coach and he had his girls ready."

The Bulldogs' Molly Ruth, who was joined on the All-State first team by teammates Stacy McGregor and Paige Impink, led her team with three goals; Impink had two. McGregor and Erin Timochenko had one each.

"We played well, but it was a heartbreaking way to end the season," Shaner said.

Wilson went into the fourth quarter holding a 6-4 lead with goals from Ruth and Impink in the final 1:35 of the third.

The Maidens had trouble getting to the net in the initial minutes of the period as Impink led a good defensive effort.

With the clock winding down, Bartle called timeout with 2:31 to go. North Penn was able to switch the momentum.

Shortly after the pause, Sam Deana lofted the ball top shelf over Bulldogs keeper Danielle Moyer to cut it to 6-5.

Deana threw the ball over the crossbar with 1:10 to go, but didn't miss when she got another chance.

With the shot clock down to 12 seconds, she lofted another shot into the net to force overtime and set off a celebration in the Rick Carroll Natatorium.

"It was all heart and desire," said Bartle, a former Reading High coach. "That's the group they are."

In water polo there are two three-minute overtime periods. The Maidens needed only 43 seconds to take the lead for good as Kristi Bauer scored her third goal to make it 7-6.

Bauer scored again with 2:09 left in the second overtime period and the Bulldogs spent the rest of time trying to catch up.

North Penn keeper Katie Patterson stopped shots from Ruth and Courtney Melos.

It was Impink who finally got one past Patterson with 28 seconds to go, but a final attempt from Ruth was stopped at the buzzer.

"Before the game I told the girls how proud I was of them," Bartle said. "It's a tribute to our girls with how they hustled and excelled."

Gov. Mifflin (20-11) lost to McDowell 7-4 in the fifth-place game.

Alayna Hayick had two goals for the Mustangs; Mason Ninzeheltzer and Alex Luckey each had one.

Mifflin keeper Rena Heim was named first-team All-State.

The boys state tournament will be held next weekend at Cumberland Valley.