

INSIDE LACROSSE



Recruiting Roundup: Syracuse Shootout I Day 2

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InsideLacrosse.com



Day 2 of the Syracuse Shootout I was hot and bright – a fantastic day for so many teams to show their stuff in front of recruiters from far and wide. Over the first two days of the event, the Shootout I (which features travel and elite teams) brought 40 teams to the south campus area of Syracuse University, where the Hookway Practice Fields became a lacrosse extravaganza that lasted throughout the weekend. Teams traveled from as far away as Chicago, Cincinnati, Missouri, and Burnaby, British Columbia. Recruiters from Syracuse, Cornell, Albany, Cortland, Nazareth, Clarkson, Mercyhurst, and Le Moyne were on hand for the day's action. There were coaches from colleges in North Carolina (Guilford) and Washington, DC (Catholic), and dozens more throughout the weekend. The event has become a place where recruiters are very likely to find gems with so many high school-aged players in one place.

Cincinnati Elite 2012-2013 vs. Burnaby Mountain Jr. Elite

The Boys from Cincinnati took control of the half I caught of this matchup. Evidence of the increasing embrace for the sport in Ohio, the 2012-2013 team was impressive on both ends of the field. A senior attackman, Nick Lewis looks like another promising player coming out of the Mason program, which has recruits heading to UNC and Albany. Lewis is a

stocky, quick attackman with a fast release and hard shot. He tallied Cincy's first goal on an explosive dodge from X, putting the ball in the top left corner just as he got past GLE. Lewis plays tough and has a good set of hands on him. Other offensive players standing out for Cincinnati included Connor Polak (2012), middle Nolan Frey (2013) and Evan Beck (2012). Sophomore attackman/middle Sammy Hubbard has great size and strength, and he could be another Ohio player to watch down the line.

The defense for Cincy was backstopped by Under Armour Midwest Underclassmen member Alex Burgdorf, who has quick reflexes and looks poised in the cage. Long-stick middle Cody Englehardt (2012) played great defense for Cincinnati. He's got good footwork, and he was harassing ball carriers throughout the half I watched. He's fast and got up the field quickly. He was all over groundballs and looks like he's got solid fundamentals. Face-off man Krieg Greco (2013) played some tough short-stick defense. This team had reportedly only lost two games up to this point in the summer, both of those one goal losses in two previous tournaments.

The majority of Burnaby's players had great stick work, and you can see how that skill set allows even smallest players to be dangerous around the cage, including little Kyran Clarke (2013), who is no more than 5-7 and was taking a beating, but getting right back up. One player really making things happen on offense for the BC crew in this contest was face-off middle Ryan Sarazin (2013), who was tough to beat on the draw. He drove down the right alley and scored on an overhand shot, and later created transition, feeding inside to Clarke, who caught, turned and cranked a shot from 10 yards out. Burnaby defender Quinton Pavan made some nice plays on groundballs, winning races to the ball and also spinning through and around a bunch of checks heading up field.

Albany Power Rising Juniors vs. Binghamton Saluki

The blossoming talent in the Capital District has produced several travel teams from the area that are exciting to watch, and the Albany Power Senior team is no exception. While Albany's Top Dog team is loaded with players from Shenendehowa, this junior squad features some of the best upcoming talent from the likes of some of Section 2's other large schools, including Niskayuna, Guilderland and Shaker. Attackman Luke Goldstock from Niskayuna was one of the Albany team's offensive forces. The tall, hard-shooting attackman has smarts and can feed well, too. He's got a good stick, a quick release, and looks like he'll draw some attention if he hasn't already. Goldstock worked well with high school teammate Lucas Maloney – who put up 52 goals and 8 assists as a sophomore last season. Goldstock registered 27 goals and 18 assists for Nisky. Maloney was fighting through traffic throughout this contest, really showing the ability to get to the cage with an assortment of moves. Goldstock, Maloney, and Mike Divietro moved the ball very quickly together and put the foot on the gas early to help the Power jump out in front of Binghamton by several goals.

A midfielder who stood out to me was Jake Gargiulo, a smooth, fast and wiry player with a quick stick, hard passes and shots, and athleticism. The Balston Spa product was quick to lose him when initiating up top, and he was aggressive in transition. He put up 33 points as a sophomore middle, and he looks promising. Middle Brian Schneider, who plays at Lansingburgh, led his team last year as a sophomore with 37 points. He dodged from behind the cage, slipping inside his man and finishing with ease from just a couple yards out. Tyler Pantalone, another Nisky player with good size, was faring well in the face-off battle, and he made a quick burst down the lane, shaking his man and scoring on the move.

Dominic Sloma looks like the next defenseman from Nisky to make a name for himself. He's smooth, throws accurate checks, makes smart decisions and has the footwork to make life miserable for many attackmen. He's also got a pretty good handle. Defenders Kyle Fragnoli (Shaker) and Brandon Melius (Nisky) also played well in this game. Goaltender Evan Quinn made a couple decent saves here, though his defense wasn't letting Binghamton get too close to him.

Talking with some kind and helpful parents on the sideline, I learned this was the first semblance of a travel or elite team put together by the Binghamton program. Senior goalie Tim Langhorne was doing his best to keep Albany at bay, making some clutch saves to keep it within reach for Saluki. He stuffed a blast by Gargiulo and snagged another shot on the doorstep out of the air. Midfielders Chase Westbrook (2013) and Vince Evans (2013) and attackmen Gavin Abbott (2013) and Nishan Ketchoyian were carrying the load offensively for Binghamton, a program that has only two fellow Class A teams in Section 4 – Ithaca and Coming, the now unified district of Coming East and Coming West.

Blaze Rising Seniors vs. CNY Roadhawks 2012

The Blaze Rising Seniors – made up of players from the Rochester/Genesee River Valley – took on some of the top juniors from Section 3 in this one. Pittsford middies Corey Parke and Tyler Aycock were two of the Blaze players catching attention of recruiters throughout the day. Parke is a dangerous dodger and shooter. Aycock is a skilled defensive midfielder, has speed and stands at about 6-1, maybe 6-2. Syracuse-bound Fairport attackman/middle Derek DeJoe can shoot the lights out of the ball. DeJoe looks bigger than he did just a few months back. Even with his hard outside shot, he doesn't shy away from trying to work his way inside of a defense. He's got good hands and is an athletic player, which is why he was running some midfield this past season for Fairport coach Mike Torrelli.

Fairport netminder Blaze Riorden, Inside Lacrosse's #50 in the most recent Young Gun Rising Juniors, was fabulous in net, which he needed to be against a fast and skilled Roadhawks 2012 team. Riorden's stick just seems to seek the ball naturally, as he flicked away a couple of shots released within close range, making it look easy. His hands are incredibly fast, and he plays with a loose, casual swagger. He's got great stick skills and makes accurate passes, and the right ones. Garrett Warren is a solid long-stick middle, coming out of the successful Irondequoit program. He's athletic with sound fundamentals. Pittsford's Kevin Sanna and Churchville's Nick Bruno were notable defenders for the Blaze against the Roadhawks 2012 team.

There's a whole list of players who look like they could have breakout years in the coming season on the Roadhawks. Owen Nicola (Westhill), Scott Slater (Cicero-North Syracuse), Nick Capriotti (East Syracuse Minoa), Mike Fiorini (Baldwinsville) and sophomore Connor O'Hara (Skaneateles) are players that will be major contributors on their respective high school teams next season. But like the day before, Corcoran's Ryan Cook (2013) was tremendous for the Roadhawks. The slick and brave attackman was tough to stop any time he went to the cage, finding ways around and inside of his man. Cook is a successful varsity wrestler (going 22-9 this season), which is evident in his gritty play that compliments his great stick skills. He's smooth and relaxed with the ball. One of his goals came on a slick feed from Liverpool middle Austin Hope, who found Cook on the doorstep for a couple of fakes and the finish. He later scored after snagging a rebound in front of the cage, dipping his stick low to his left hand, scooting by a defender and then bringing it back up high to dunk it in the net.

A great individual effort, defender Jeff Conley went coast-to-coast, sliding through the defense, grabbing his own rebound after shooting once, and then depositing a goal in impressive fashion. Again, Liverpool's Bryan Capone (Vermont) was tremendous on defense. He and Cazenovia defender Goris Clayton were tough to beat all weekend. In cage, Skaneateles' Ryan Higman was seeing the ball well. He's developed throughout the year, having played an entire season as the starter for the Lakers. He's certainly a goalie to watch.

Team One Orange vs. CNY Roadhawks 2013

Team One Orange traveled to Syracuse from Chicago to display its talent. The boys from the Windy City put on a fine showing here against the 2013 Roadhawks. AJ Fish (2013) is a smart player who showed his shooting abilities by burying a shot from way outside. On another play, he drove lefty from X, got topside and buried an overhand shot top shelf. He's a skilled creator and was doing a nice job of finding openings for himself and his teammates. Matt Brown (2013) looked like a tough, fast midfielder, and AJ Schmidt (2013) looks to have some upside as well. Grant Soucy (2013) was really active on defense for Team One Orange, getting all guys' hands and covering a lot of ground.

I learned of a reward system put in place by some of the parents of the Team One players: beef jerky awarded to anyone netting a hat trick, anyone scoring with a long pole, or a goaltender pitching a shutout. You have to appreciate such a savory incentive.

The Roadhawks 2013 have some middies who looked like they'll be players to watch next season. Jack Fabrizio scored on a sweep left to right and ripping an overhand shot. And Shaun McDonald scored on a drive to the cage after coming with a groundball.

Blaze Rising Juniors vs. LB3 Rising Juniors

The Blaze Rising Juniors had all kinds of players who I'm sure recruiters would love to speak with. One player sparking some conversation was Luke Bailey (McQuaid Jesuit), the younger brother of Jake, who will be a freshman at UNC this fall. He's a force in the midfield, off the wing, and he just torments the ball carrier. He's got some vicious checks and I saw him cause multiple turnovers. He's got those long limbs to use to his advantage. He covers a lot of ground in a hurry. Bailey looks like he's the next in what has become a pipeline for outstanding defenseman coming out of Western New York.

Penfield goaltender Keith Keehn was phenomenal in the half I saw him face the LB3 Rising Juniors. He was flying all over the place to turn shots away, including a couple of beauties right on the doorstep. It looked like business as usual for the Section 5 netminder. He had some tough defenders in front of him, including Bailey, Charlie Cummins (Penfield) and Andrew Mietelski (Fairport). Midfielder Chauncey Scissum is an athletic specimen. He's a bit raw, but he was one of the more athletic kids I saw all day long. Jay Valkiener and Kevin Vaughn (both Fairport middies) look like promising players.

For LB3, Eric Fernandez is a small and shifty, and he was certainly one of the Philly-area team's better creators. He showed some brass to fight through the Blaze defense one a couple plays, standing up to some physical play. Other players who stood out for LB3 were long stick Andrew Eidenshink, middle Mike Pascali and defender Pat Sawyer.

Champion Select vs. BLA Rising Seniors

This game was fun to watch, as there were clearly some bragging rights on the line for the two Buffalo area teams. The player really shining in this game was Champion Select's Alex Misterman from St. Francis. He's a well rounded middle who can win face-offs, dodge, has the quicks to play defense, creates transition – and he's got a great sense of the field. He's short and has quick change of direction, one time just slicing through the defense with a face dodge, speeding to the cage and scoring on a bounce shot. The kid looks legit. As did a number of his Champion Select team mates, including Cooper Stefaniak (St. Francis), who ripped a nice overhand shot from the wing, middle Jimmy May (Frontier) and attackman Pat McCooey (Orchard Park). Phil Brind'Amour (Iroquois HS) – a good-sized attackman at 6-2, 200-pounds with nice stick skills – used his big frame to bull dodge and power past defenders. He scored twice when I was watching, including a goal on a sweet backhand shot right in front of the net. Hamburg attackman Mitch Shafer, a solid attackman who played well all weekend, was in on the scoring action against BLA.

Defender Kole Robinson (Orchard Park) has good fundamentals, and he helped the Select smother a talented BLA Rising Seniors squad. Niagara-Wheatfield netminder Rob Einenbart turned away a number of shots in helping BLA keep it within reach in the half I saw.