

McDonogh Captures MIAA Dual Meet Crown in Barnburner with John Carroll

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Title Chase Comes Down to Final Bout, Karl Lindsey Secures Win for Eagles

The fans gathered at the McDonogh School on Friday night were treated to an exciting, back and forth affair. The packed gym had a lot to cheer about as both teams put on quite a show. In the end, McDonogh (No.1 in the latest rankings by the Maryland State Wrestling Association) would prevail 32-24 over No.2 John Carroll, but the ride was anything but smooth.

Karl Lindsey's match was a microcosm of the night for the Eagles. Lindsey (113) faced Mike McCabe, who he was 0-3 against in his career. All Lindsey had to do was not get pinned. He did more than that though. Lindsey took a 2-0 lead on a reversal in the second period.

McCabe chose top to start the third period and proceeded to lock up a cradle. McCabe turned Lindsey, but was not able to flatten his shoulders. When Lindsey broke free of the cradle he reversed McCabe to take a 4-3 lead, and secure the win.

"I feel pretty good. I just wanted to put the team on my back," Lindsey said. "I was a bit nervous coming into the match but my teammates helped calm me down and it really helped me when I got on the mat. My mind set was pretty iffy, when it came time I got really down, but then I went out there and I just focused on having a great match and I did."

The Eagles won eight of the fourteen bouts. The big guns did their job, and the young guys stepped up with wins or gutsy performances in close matches.

"The competition in our league is really good. It's fun when it's good, it's good for the sport," said McDonogh Head Coach Pete Welch. "It's a nice feeling to get another one of these (MIAA Conference Dual Meet Title), but it comes with a lot of hard work. A lot of teams are trying to do it too and there are a lot of really good teams out there and John Carroll is one of them. St. Joe the other night coulda gone either way, and this one coulda gone either way."

It was clear from the beginning that this match could go anyway. The teams traded wins over the first few bouts.

The Patriots' CJ Skokowski (No.3) faced No.14 Caden Mareno to start things off at 120lbs. Skokowski opened up in the second period coming close to pinning Mareno and taking a 6-3 lead. Mareno stormed back with two takedowns in the third period, but came up just short, 8-7.

Grant Gorvett gave McDonogh an early 5-3 lead when he earned a 25-9 technical-fall over Eric Ashton (126). No.3 Zach Dwyer (132) matched that with an even more impressive 15-0 technical-fall versus Alexander Kline. John Carroll was out front 8-5.

McDonogh then won three straight to go up by eight, 16-8.

No.2 Quinn Devaney (132) moved up to 138lbs to face Brian Chalmers (No.21). Devaney used three takedowns and an escape to secure a 7-3 victory. At 145 Sam Martino (No.3) squared off against No.7 Steve Jernigan, grabbing a 6-2 decision. Cameron Harrell rolled up the points on No.23 Andy Milner taking him down 14 times en route to a 28-13 technical-fall.

Harrell (No.1) will be attending the University of Virginia in the fall, and finds himself currently ranked 5th in the country by FloWrestling.

John Carroll grabbed the next two matches to retake the lead, 18-16. No.9 Austin Ross (160) beat Andrew Hurdle 8-0 and No.1 Chris Almony flattened Ryan Walsh at the 1:19 mark of the first period. Unfortunately for the Patriots, this would be their final time out front.

Myles Martin, ranked 2nd in the nation By FloWrestling, made quick work of Devin Darrington registering the fall just 20 seconds into the bout. Martin will be wrestling at Ohio State next year. It was now 22-18 in favor of the Eagles.

Brandon Shure authored an 11-3 major-decision over Adam Berg to pad McDonogh's lead, 26-18.

220lbs featured two grapplers ranked No.1 in Maryland. Hunter Ritter bumped up from 195 to face McDonogh's Mike Smith. The match, which was a highlight of the evening, was almost derailed early in the first period when Ritter tweaked his knee during a scramble. Ritter, Flo's No.4 grappler at 195, dug deep and shook off the injury to post a 7-5 win. Ritter is heading to Wisconsin to ply his trade next season, and Smith is heading down the road to the Naval Academy.

The heavyweights in this meeting are two of the best in the state, and they went after it. The match turned into a blood bath with both wrestlers needing blood timeouts. In the end No.1 Wyatt Cook outlasted No.3 Christian Scott (John Carroll) 6-3. The back and forth wins brought the score to 29-21 in favor of the Eagles.

There two bouts left and the Patriots still had a shot at the win but they needed bonus points from one or both of their final grapplers.

Luke Strappelli worked hard for all three periods, and then put in more work in the overtime periods. Strappelli was close to securing a takedown on Aidan Welsh at the end of the third period, but the call didn't go his way. In the second overtime period he scored on a reversal and also earned one point when Welsh locked his hands. Strappelli rode Welsh out for a 5-2 win.

The score was now 29-24, and up stepped the unlikely hero, Karl Lindsey. There would be no Cinderella ending for John Carroll.

“(I) can’t be prouder. Everybody fought every weight class,” McDonogh coach Joe Bakewell observed. “The six pound match was phenomenal, and that Strappelli kid wrestled well. Man I tell you our kids scrapped and fought for the whole time. Karl at 113, thrown to his back, fights off it and reverses the kid. That kid beat him ten nothing last year, and he’s worked really hard and I’m so proud when a kid works really hard and sees the outcome that comes with it.”

“They wrestled to win and not worry about losing. We just left it out there and it’s so hard in our sport of wrestling because it’s just you and somebody else out there. But the effort, it was a complete team effort tonight. John Carroll is a good team. They’re well coached. They came prepared and they wrestled well tonight. I’m gonna tell you right now, everybody that came here got their money’s worth tonight. It was a great match.”

John Carroll still has a chance to reach its other goals for the season. The MIAA and MIS Tournaments are right around the corner. Tonight’s loss was a bit of a heartbreaker, but it could propel them to a strong finish, and coveted state title.

“We thought that Wyatt was gonna have less horsepower than he had and we could take advantage of it,” said John Carroll coach Keith Watson. “Everything pretty much went the way we thought it would go. McCabe wrestled his butt off and had that kid in a cradle for what seemed like forever and just couldn’t get him flat. Karl looked like he just came flying out of a cannon and landed in the middle of the mat and was ready to wrestle. It’s hard to allow for the energy and the momentum and the incentive that the crowd gives you.”

“I’m very proud of my kids. It woulda been a nice one to have, but that’s the way it goes. And you know what. At least they’re not jerks about it. We’ve wrestled teams in places and they act like they’ve never won a tournament before. Obviously McDonogh is the big dog and they’re obviously used to doing this, used to winning. I don’t think they’re used to being pressed. I look at that score, and I’m like 32-24? That is not indicative of how close this thing was. Congratulations to them. We’ll make some adjustments and we’ll be ready to rock next weekend.”

The match was the last dual meet in Watson’s Hall of Fame career.

“He’s put a lot of time in,” Pete Welch stated of Watson. “He’s done exactly what I’ve done and what our coaches have done; spend a lot of time in gyms, a lot of long weekends. Not for money, just for the love of the sport and the kids. My hat is off to him. I didn’t realize this was his last season until this week. He’s done a lot of special stuff on and off the mat, and a lot of organizational stuff throughout the state for the sport too so he will be missed”

McDonogh 32, John Carroll 24

(Match started at 120)

120-CJ Skokowski (JC) dec Caden Mareno (McD), 8-7
126-Grant Gorvett (McD) tech-fall Eric Ashton (JC), 25-9
132-Zach Dwyer (JC) tech-fall Alexander Kline (McD), 15-0
138-Quinn Devaney (McD) dec Brian Chalmers (JC), 7-3
145-Sam Martino (McD) dec Steve Jernigan (JC), 6-2
152-Cameron Harrell (McD) tech-fall Andy Milner (JC), 28-13
160-Austin Ross (JC) maj-dec Andrew Hurdle (McD), 8-0
170-Chris Almony (JC) pinned Ryan Walsh (McD), 1:19
182-Myles Martin (McD) pinned Devin Darrington (JC), :20
195-Brandon Shure (McD) maj-dec Adam Berg (JC), 11-3
220-Hunter Ritter (JC) dec Mike Smith (McD), 7-5
285-Wyatt Cook (McD) dec Christian Scott (JC), 6-3
106-Luke Strappelli (JC) dec Aidan Welsh (McD), 5-2 OT TB
113-Karl Lindsey (McD) dec Mike McCabe (JC), 4-3

Videos *(Not all matches were recorded)*

120-CJ Skokowski vs Caden Mareno

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8s3k04EFFM>

138-Quinn Devaney vs Brian Chalmers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caVzWTbn924>

145-Sam Martino vs Steve Jernigan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuaTkuj4EXY>

152-Cameron Harrell vs Andy Milner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6MBbbnHA1M>

220-Hunter Ritter vs Mike Smith

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weTDw4uNVtQ>

285-Wyatt Cook vs Christian Scott

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbR26PIJIEk>

106-Luke Strappelli vs Aidan Welsh

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xEuNcMLX728>

113-Karl Lindsey vs Mike McCabe

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4k7OU4os_fu