

Sep. 13 Boys Soccer Round-Up



*Nottingham's Aaron Stovall has a step on Lawrence's Sean Purcell during today's game (Photo by John Blaine/purchase photos by e-mailing [jbsportphoto@aol.com](mailto:jbsportphoto@aol.com)).*

**Nottingham puts forth an impressive effort in improving to 2-0**

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**Sep. 13:** The Nottingham High boys' soccer team discovered a new fan today.

"Give credit to Mike Braender," said Lawrence coach PJ Barrett after the Northstars 4-1 win over his Cardinals. "He's done a great job coaching them. It's not just Luca (deStasio). His brother (Fulvio) plays well, (Uzo) Iloka, their midfielders. They have a solid team. I'm impressed with what they have."

Nottingham looked impressive in going 2-0. And Luca deStasio played a major part as he scored two goals and dictated play as Nottingham rallied from a halftime deficit.

"Obviously I try to look to get teammates involved," deStasio said. "But if the space is open I'll take it."

And it came open today?

"A little bit," he said with a grin.

The Northstars struggled slightly out of the gate and Lawrence took a 1-0 lead on a fluke goal that took a bad hop over Taylor Guest's head.

From there, however, Nottingham began to roll. They took the final 10 shots of the first half, as Iloka, Jacob Kouroume, Aaron Stovall, Fulvio and Luca deStasio and Gary Rojas all launched balls that were either saved or went just wide.

"I was pretty happy with the way we came out today," Braender said. "We started slow in the past and I think that we've made some adjustments in the pre-game for getting prepared. I thought we were ready to play today and we played well, we were just unlucky in the first 10 minutes."

Luca deStasio felt otherwise, saying "I thought we came out rusty. Thank God we picked it up in the second half."

And Luca led the way.

With 1:13 gone in the second half, Fulvio deStasio got around his man and launched a shot that Luke Buschman came out to deflect. But with the goalie out of position, Luca picked up his brother's rebound and banged it home.

Several minutes later, Luca dribbled around a defender and blasted one from the right side into the far corner to make it 2-1. Fulvio deStasio and Uzo Iloka capped the scoring with goals at 28:06 and 16:47.

"People are going to mark Luca, but he does what he can," Braender said. "When he wants it he goes and gets it. I'm happy with the way he's led the team, that's why he's the captain (along with Stovall).

"He and Aaron have been in the varsity program for four years. They know what to expect now, the pace of play, what it takes to get yourself in preparation for counties and a better season. They know every game matters. We're in a tough conference, no doubt about it. You gotta expect everyone to come out and give their best effort every day."

deStasio gave a pretty good effort today with Rutgers coaches Dan Donigan and Dave Beck in attendance.

"I've been in touch with a few schools," he said. "Hopefully in a few months I'll find out officially where I'm going. I'll wait it out and don't want to rush anything.

"I've narrowed it down a little bit but I'm not set on one school yet."

When asked what schools he's considering, deStasio smiled and said "I'm keeping it on the down low for now."

The talented midfielder prepared for the season by playing travel ball with Stovall this summer on the LSTS Jorge Romano team, which was regional champion.

"We had a productive summer," he said. "We kept in shape and we're working hard in the field now."

It is reflected in the record, as Nottingham has the potential to do some nice things this year.

"I think we just move the ball well," deStasio said. "In the past we liked to just kick and run. Now we work well together, put passes together and we're putting the ball in the back of the net. We're a pretty good team."

A team that has outscored its opponents 10-1 in the first two games.

"It's big for the program and big for our confidence," Braender said of the start. "But we have to play each game one at a time and take it from there."

## **Steinert finally gets to play and makes it worthwhile with 5-1 victory**

After having its opener with Hightstown rained out, then having its make-up game on Friday and Saturday washed out due to field conditions, Steinert finally got to play today and rolled to a 5-1 victory over a strong Trenton team.

"It felt great to play," said stopper Mike Fornaro. "After three weeks of hard work it was nice to see what we've accomplished. It was a good win for us and all we can hope to do is keep winning games and keep working hard in training to improve each time we step on the field."

Gilmer Davila had two goals for the Spartans, while Pat Remboski, Xavier Ceballos and John Powers had one each. Connor Moffat picked up three assists, while Joe Paragone and Zachary Gates also had assists.

Devon Downs made four saves, and coach Todd Jacobs lauded the defensive work of Derek Shearer, Remboski, Fornaro and Zachary Castaldo. Holding down Trenton is no easy task as several transfers have given the Tornados a dangerous combination in the front.

"Trenton had some very skillful guys up top who could hold the ball and turn quickly," Fornaro said. "As a team we did great not giving them time on the ball to see the field, and really just giving them trouble when they had the ball."

"Their goal was a beautiful combination play from the midfield all the way up to the finish, and you had to hand it to them, we were exploited so easily because two of the four players in our back line were caught up the field."

Fornaro said his biggest concern was making sure he kept from getting burned by the quick TCHS forwards.

"I heard that Trenton had a lot of speed and some players that really could handle the ball," he said. "My main worry as a stopper were 1v1 situations, and making quick decisions when I had the ball, just so I wouldn't turn it over in a dangerous spot."

Evidently, Fornaro and his mates kept the danger to a minimum.

## **Rogers excels in goal as Hamilton drops tough one to Redbirds**

Goalie Kyle Rogers came up with 17 saves but Allentown managed to slip one by and that was all the Redbirds needed in a 1-0 win over Hamilton.



*It was going to take a little more than a held shirt to stop Mike Fornaro and the Spartans from opening their season with a win over Trenton High today (Photo by Mike Dill/purchase photos at [michaeldillphotography.com](http://michaeldillphotography.com)).*

Anthony DeRisi scored the game's lone goal with 15 minutes remaining from just outside the 18.

"We played tough," said Hornet coach Mark "Goose" Laurenti, whose team fell to 0-2. "Our defense did a good job behind Matuesz Szalda and Victor Franco."

Allentown (2-0) held an 18-7 shot advantage.