

MIAA DIVISION 1 GIRLS' SOCCER | ACTON BOXBORO 1, SHREWSBURY 0

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## Jensen, A-B carry the day

By David Benoit, Globe Correspondent | November 18, 2007

WESTBOROUGH -- The last time an Acton-Boxboro girls' soccer team made the state finals was 1988, when Ruairi Sweeney was a junior at the school.

Yesterday, Sweeney coached A-B to its first MIAA Division 1 state title, completing a 23-0-1 season with a 1-0 win over Shrewsbury in a battle of Colonials.

"This is pretty special," Sweeney said. "This was a goal of ours all season, and it wouldn't have been a disappointment, but this is special."

In a game where a torturous wind continually sent the ball in odd directions, A-B got the only offense it needed off of a free kick in the 35th minute. After Hayley Brock was knocked down by a Shrewsbury defender 35 yards from the goal, senior midfielder Lindsey Raymond sent a free kick into a crowd where it bounced around a few feet. Finally, A-B's Ceci Jensen got a leg on it for the game's only goal.

"Ceci has been tenacious all year," Sweeney said of his junior forward. "She just kept at it until it went in."

For most of the game the Shrewsbury defense seemed intent on not losing to Brock, who had scored A-B's previous three game-winners. Shrewsbury senior Ashlyn Derosier was assigned to mark the prolific sophomore, and, with some help, Shrewsbury managed to triple- and quadruple-cover Brock.

A physical game in the middle eventually led to a Brock yellow card in the 66th minute, a sign of her frustration. But A-B went undefeated for a reason, and turned to the rest of its offense instead, including Jensen and senior forward Cassie Wagner.

The heart of A-B's game was the play of its midfielders, especially senior Courtney Findlen, who controlled the ball and provided valuable defensive help. Findlen may be small but her toughness was on full display the entire tournament.

"It's been a long year," she said afterward. "But this is the perfect way to end, this was the perfect season." ■