

WNY Flash Win WPS Title in 1st Year

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8/27/2011: ROCHESTER, N.Y. — The Western New York Flash of Women's Professional Soccer won the WPS Championship at Sahlen's Stadium on Saturday evening, edging the Philadelphia Independence 5-4 in a penalty shootout after the score was tied 1-1 after 120 minutes of play. The lone goal scorer for the Flash, Canadian International Christine Sinclair was named the game MVP in front of a record crowd of 10,461 for a WPS Final.

Kia McNeill of the Independence defended Sinclair and the forward line of Marta and Alex Morgan very well in the early minutes of the game. In the 9th minute, Marta crossed a ball in the air to Sinclair, but McNeill beat her to the challenge and cleared it away.

The first shot of the game surprisingly came in the 28th minute from Philadelphia's Tasha Kai. Her shot was picked up by Flash goalkeeper Ashlyn Harris. Shots were sparse as both defenses were playing very tight and cautious. The Flash and the Independence both tallied just one shot at halftime, as much of the play was in the midfield area. The Flash led the advantage in corner kicks 4-2.

The second half pace picked up and in the 54th minute as WPS Player of the Year Veronica Boquete sent a ball over the top of the Flash defense to Amy Rodriguez. The US National Team striker's touch around Harris was a bit too far, and the chance was cleared by the Flash defense.

The Flash became one goal closer to becoming 2011 WPS Champions when Sinclair scored off a ball over the top of the Philadelphia defense from Canadian teammate

Candace Chapman in the 64th minute. Sinclair drilled the ball to the far right post past Nicole Barnhart for her 11th of the season.

As the game seemed to be winding down and a WPS Title was in the cards for the Flash, the resilient Philadelphia side equalized in the 87th minute after Danesha Adams hit the post with a shot and the rebound was slid through the near post past Coast Guard Goalkeeper of the Year Ashlyn Harris into the net by Rodriguez. Moments later, Marta sent in a cross from the left side to second half substitute Beverly Goebel who hit the crossbar in the 90th minute, inches from scoring the go-ahead goal in the dying seconds.

Entering two mandatory 15-minute periods, the Flash led in corners 9-2, and in shots 8-5. By the end of the overtimes, the Flash still led in corners by 14-2, but were down in shots 10-9. In the 108th minute, Goebel received her second yellow card of the game, resulting in a red card and ejection. The Flash played down one player the rest of the overtime until penalty kicks.

The penalty kick-off began with the Flash shooting first. Marta, Sinclair, Captain Caroline Seger, McCall Zerboni and Yael Averbuch all made their shots for the Flash, going five for five. Tensions rose as the Independence matched the Flash shot for shot. Laura del Rio of the Independence lined up to take the last shot and Harris dove to save del Rio's attempt to make the final count 5-4, and the players rushed the field to celebrate the 2011 WPS Championship. The Flash organization have now won back to back Championships as last season they capped off an undefeated campaign by winning the W-League Championship as the Buffalo Flash in August and joined the WPS in September of 2010. The Flash finish the season 14-2-3 as Regular Season Champions and WPS Champions.

About the WNY Flash

The WNY Flash joined Women's Professional Soccer as an expansion club in September of 2010, directly following the clubs decisive W-League Championship as the Buffalo Flash in July of 2010. The Flash will play all WPS home games at the Rhinos Stadium in Rochester NY , home to the Rochester Rhinos. The Flash will train out of owner Joe Sahlen's indoor soccer facility, Sahlen Sports Park , in Elma , NY . The Flash colors are Red, Yellow, and Black, to match the Sahlen entities: Sahlen Packing Co., Sahlen Sports Park , and Team Sahlen racing team. The Flash opens their season away at Boston on April 17 at 6:00 PM live on Fox Soccer Channel.

WNY Flash Update

Written by Administrator

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