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Hickok, Barlow stop Ludlowe

DAN FARRAND Staff writer

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REDDING — In three years, Barlow junior goalkeeper Cody Hickok has never lost a shootout.

And he wasn't about to let that streak end Saturday, not with his team's season on the line.

Hickok made a sprawling save on Rob Bedson's shot, the final kick of the penalty kick shootout, lifting seventh-seeded Barlow to a 2-1 win over No. 15 Fairfield Ludlowe in the quarterfinals of the Class L state playoffs.

Barlow, which will play the winner of Monday's No. 3 Wethersfield/No. 6 Avon game at a site and time yet to be announced, won the shootout 5-4.

"In PKs I'm just in the zone," Hickok said. "This year I want to win more than ever before. I know how good our team is and I knew I had to step up."

Hickok certainly did that Saturday, making four saves, including one on another Bedson penalty kick late in the first half.

"You got to give two thumbs up to Cody," said Barlow coach Paul Winstanley, who has also never lost a penalty kick in four years at Barlow. "He played great and made some great saves. He's been in PKs three times and every time he comes up big."

It seemed Saturday's quarterfinal contest was destined to be decided on penalty kicks after both regulation goals were scored via penalties.

Dylan Stone put Barlow up 1-0 after drilling a penalty kick past Fairfield Ludlowe goalkeeper Brendan Faughnan with 6:33 left in the first half.

Barlow was awarded the PK after Alex Pelzar was taken down in the box by a handful of Ludlowe defenders.

The

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call was a questionable one, but the officials were quick to return the favor, awarding Ludlowe a penalty kick three minutes later.

Jake Soodek was called for upending Ludlowe's Casper Gimond in the box, although it appeared there was very little contact.

Bedson's free-shot was blocked by Hickok, but Andrew Largier came charging in and fired the rebound into the empty net to knot the score at 1-1.

"We did not play well," Winstanley said. "We made some mental mistakes that were just unacceptable."

Barlow received four yellow cards in the game, two of which were given to Alex Van Steinburgh, who had to leave the game.

Ludlowe, however, also lost its composure as junior Ryan Brennan was given a yellow card for aggressive play and then later received a red card for intentionally bumping the official.

Brennan's red card forced Ludlowe to play a man-down for the remaining eight minutes of the second half and both overtimes.

Barlow, however, failed to take advantage of the man-up situation and finish Ludlowe off, just as they had all day.

Although Barlow out-shot Ludlowe 21-11 and took nine corner kicks compared to Ludlowe's one, Barlow failed to find nylon.

But when it counted most, Barlow finally found the back of the net.

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Ludlowe's Andrew Largier leaps to stop the ball as he... (Whitney Kidder-Alvarez/Connecticut Post)

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All five Barlow shooters — Stone, James Wayne, Taylor Armstrong, Scott St. Cyr and Mike Flynn — all scored, setting up Hickok's game-winning save.

"I wish we would have done it early, but we finally figured out a way to get it done," St. Cyr, a senior captain, said. "We dominated most of the game, but we couldn't finish. At least we did in PKs."

Barlow wins 5-4 in penalties

Fairfield Ludlowe 1 0 0 0 — 1

Barlow 1 0 0 0 — 1

Records: Fairfield Ludlowe 9-7-2; Barlow 15-2-4

Goals: FL — Andrew Largier; B — Dylan Stone; Goalies: FL — Brendan Faughnan (5 saves); B — Cody Hickok (4)

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