



## Falcons on a mission

### Barlow boys top Brookfield, inch closer to elusive title

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BROOKFIELD -- Joel Barlow High seniors Scott St. Cyr and Dylan Stone have been seeking redemption this year.

After falling just a goal shy of both the South-West Conference and Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference Class M state crowns last year, their goals in the 2007 campaign were clear: Do everything they couldn't in 2006.

"We won't accept anything less than an SWC and state championship this year," St. Cyr, an All-New England selection in 2006, said. "Dylan and I don't want to go through what we did last year."

And the duo made sure the Falcons wouldn't suffer a similar fate Monday as fifth-seeded Joel Barlow topped No. 4 Brookfield 2-0 in the SWC quarterfinal matchup at Brookfield High School on Monday.

The Falcons (10-2-4) will take on top-seeded and undefeated Bethel at 7 p.m. at Pomperaug High School in the SWC semifinals today.

Stone tallied an assist and scored the Falcons' second goal on a penalty kick while St. Cyr also recorded an assist for Joel Barlow on Alex Van Steinburgh's goal.

"Scott is amazing in his ability to control the game and disrupt the other team," Joel Barlow coach Paul Winstanley said. "He's does so much work for us and when Dylan comes back and creates chances we are very tough to beat."

Just ask Brookfield (10-6-0).

The Bobcats, who beat the Falcons 2-0 in the teams' lone regular-season meeting back on Oct. 2, were scrambling most of the first half in a desperate effort to stop the Falcons' onslaught.

Unfortunately for Brookfield, they simply couldn't keep up with Stone and St. Cyr.

Stone helped set up the Falcons' first score with a great individual move while tip-toeing the left sideline.

The senior eluded a Brookfield defender with a dramatic change-of-direction dribble that gave him just enough space to send the ball into the penalty box.

St. Cyr leaped up and headed the ball from the far post, back to a wide-open Van Steinburgh, who pounded the ball into the back of the net, putting Barlow up 1-0 just over four minutes into the game.

"That's what we do," Winstanley said. "We possess, try to get the defense moving and create chances."

Barlow had plenty of opportunities to score early, and it took the Falcons less than seven minutes to find nylon again.

Stone again was the catalyst behind Barlow's second goal, sending a perfect pass to a streaking Van Steinburgh in the goal box.

Brookfield senior defenseman Matt Huttemann, who was beaten on the play, took down the Falcon forward in the penalty area, setting up Stone's penalty kick.

The senior captain easily beat Brookfield keeper Matt Bonn, booting the ball in the upper right corner.

"We'd been waiting for this game all week," St. Cyr said. "We were so pumped that we really came out fired up to go get that first goal. That really set the tone for us."

Barlow nearly went up 3-0 when St. Cyr found Stone on a run. Stone fired a shot to the lower-left corner of the net, but he was denied by Bonn, who made a diving one-handed save.

"I thought we were actually better this game," Brookfield coach Jared Sheikh said. "We just squandered a few opportunities and made some mistakes and at this level if you make mistakes you'll find yourself pulling the ball out of your net."

But two goals proved to be more than enough for Cody Hickok and the Barlow defense, who shut out a determined Brookfield squad in the second half.

Hickok made nine saves on 11 Brookfield shots and smothered other Bobcat chances by punching out several free kicks and long throw-ins.

It was the junior netminder's 33rd career-shutout, which adds to his Barlow record.

The save of the night, however, was made by Barlow back Chris Ferullo.

The sophomore made a diving clear, out-racing Brookfield's A.J. Stueck to a deflected Mike Shaker shot that had trickled behind Hickok.

"Chris stepped up like a young man and gave us a huge boost back there," Winstanley said of Ferullo. "Mentally, he decided he was not going to let them score, he made a great play and it's one I'm not sure we make in the beginning of the season."

It's been the play of players like Ferullo and Van Steinburgh that has helped Barlow go 6-0-2 in its last eight games. The Falcons last loss of the season came against Brookfield.

"We have a lot of young kids stepping up now," St. Cyr said. "Chris struggled at the beginning of the season, but he is playing great now. He made that great save and marked Brookfield's best striker (Shaker) all day. The younger guys are playing with a lot of confidence now."

The Bobcats, meanwhile, are back-pedaling at the wrong time. Brookfield has lost four of its last five games as they now wait for the state playoffs to begin.

"We are certainly reeling," Sheikh said. "This week off is really going to be good for us. We've lost our emotional edge. Period. And the only way we can get it back is through hard work."

Barlow, however, is flying high as they get ready to face top-seeded and undefeated Bethel on less than 24 hours rest.

The Wildcats handed the Falcons' its only other loss this season, beating Barlow 3-2 on Sept. 17.

"We have a lot of confidence and we still feel like we are the team to beat," St. Cyr

said. "We still remember after they beat us, they called us 'A bunch of cocky show boaters.' We remember that and I know we are all ready to play."

Joel Barlow (10-2-4, 9-2-3) 2 0 "" 2

Brookfield (10-6-0, 9-5-0) 0 0 "" 2

SCORING: 1. JB, Alex Van Steinburgh (Scott St. Cyr and Dylan Stone); 2. JB, Stone (PK).

SHOTS: Joel Barlow: 12; Brookfield: 11. SAVES: Cody Hickok (JB) 9; Matt Bonn (B) 2. CORNER KICKS: Joel Barlow: 3; Brookfield: 2.

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