

# Cougars capture New England title

The 2019 Lady Cougars soccer team claimed the New England championship on Monday afternoon, defeating Bristol CC in a penalty kick shootout after 110 minutes of scoreless soccer. Holyoke controlled possession of the

ball for most of the game and outshot their opposition while perfectly implementing a defensive strategy to keep Bristol's potent offense from scoring. The penalty kicks went six rounds with Holyoke emerging triumphant

by a 5-4 shootout score. The New England Championship is the HCC women's soccer program's eighth in a row and 12th in the past 14 years.

Lady Cougars' goalkeeper

*See SOCCER, page 10*



*Submitted photo*

The Holyoke Community College Women's Soccer team captured the New England Championship on Monday and will play in a district championship game this weekend.

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Hannah Garon (Monson, MA / Monson HS) was superb in the shootout, saving two of the six penalty kicks she faced while also scoring as one of Holyoke's shooters. Garon's save against Bristol's sixth shooter was a spectacular diving stop. Garon made two saves in the game before the shootout, earning her and the team's tenth shutout of the season. Defensive midfielder Kayla La Fortune (Holyoke, MA / Holyoke HS) was exceptional for the Cougars, tasked with preventing Bristol's leading goal scorer from receiving the ball and taking shots on goal. Bristol's top scorer is leading the nation in NJCAA Division III with 47 goals and had scored in all but one of BCC's previous games. Against the Cougars on Monday, she was held without a shot on goal, thanks mostly to the extraordinary defending of La Fortune. The entire Cougar defensive line of

Jessie Payne (Monson, MA / Monson HS), Kari Little (Amherst, MA / Amherst Regional HS) and Gabby Petlock (Southampton, MA / Smith Vocational HS) played a strong game. Scoring in the shootout, along with Garon, were Petlock, Little, Gab Robert (Monson, MA / Monson HS) and Lizzy Zollo (Monson, MA / Monson HS).

The New England champion Lady Cougars are 10-5-3 overall, 10-1-1 regionally, and 10-3-2 in NJCAA Division III. They will travel to Uniondale, NY on Saturday to play against Nassau CC in a district championship game kicking off at 5:15 p.m. The winner will advance to the NJCAA National Championship Tournament (Elite 8). The sides met earlier this year in Holyoke with Nassau winning 1-0. Holyoke and Nassau have met in the district championship round in four of the last five years with the Lady Cougars winning last season and advancing to nationals.