

Crab Feast Tournament 2023 Standouts

Tied up with minutes remaining in the Crab Feast Tournament 2023 championship game, Brotherly Love '23 found a little offensive magic and strung together two late goals to earn a 8-6 victory over Thunder LB3 Blue and a top '21 summer tournament title.

Late in the fourth quarter Brotherly Love midfielder Austin Conner (Strath Haven) scored on an extra-man opportunity on an assist from attackman Colin Sullivan (Lampeter Strasburg) to take a one-goal lead.

Midfielder Matteo Ruttora (Salesianum) followed soon after, faking high, driving the middle and letting it rip to seal the victory.

"I was looking to see if the defenseman topside was going to start coming toward me," Matteo said postgame. "Then as soon as I threw the fake I saw that he was cutting back toward his player. I put power on it, wasn't really aiming for a spot."

Matteo, Conner and midfielder Marek Seaman (Bayard Rustin) each scored twice for Brotherly Love. Goals also came from Wells Flinn (Haverford School) and Bret Bergey (Downingtown West). Brotherly Love's special teams also stood out, with Ryan Cunningham (Salesianum) winning face-offs and goalie Patrick Jameison (Conestoga) making key saves.

"This team is very talented, so once we start getting going there's almost nothing you can do once we're in gear," Matteo said. "We were all tired, but at the end of the day it's who wants it more."

Brotherly Love finished a perfect 6-0 in the tournament, beating Resolute Black and Next Level Blue on the way to the title game. As the name suggests the title-winning team hails from the greater Philadelphia and Delaware region, with players assembled from some of the area's top high school lacrosse programs.

"I have three kids here who play on the same high school team as me," Matteo said. "A lot of these kids go to school with each other, it helps us out in the long run, in every game we play. Connections help this team."

Despite the loss Thunder LB3 Blue, who hail from the Atlanta area, put together a tremendous tournament, beating the Baltimore-based Crabs 2023 and Long Island's Team 91 Bandits to earn a spot in Sunday's title game.

Attackman Niko Karetzos (Pace) led Thunder LB3 with two goals, while Alex Lobel (Roswell) added a goal and an assist. Other goals came from Robbie Walker (King's Ridge) Brian Edwards (Grady) and Greyson Brockman (West Forsyth).

2023 Standouts

Wells Flinn, M, Haverford School/Brotherly Love

Flinn's a natural playmaker in the middle of the field. He makes timely decisions with the ball in settled situations, but isn't afraid to push the tempo and let it rip in transition. Flinn's also sharp on defense with a smart two-way game.

Austin Conner, A, Strath Haven/Brotherly Love

Part of a deep Philly-area crew, Conner showed speed and smarts on the field. He's got a great burst off the groundball into offense, but can also slow it down and make a more informed dodge.

Matteo Ruttora, M, Salesianum/Brotherly Love

You like a guy who wants the ball late in games. He read situations quickly and made good decisions, but still was tough in the middle of the field. Smart and worked well within his offense.

Marek Seaman, M, Bayard Rustin/Brotherly Love

Does your team need an offensive midfielder in the 2023 class? Head to the Philly area. Seaman's another in a strong lineup shows versatility in the middle of the field; he can attack the cage, drive alleys, make the important pass in transition and work the ride.

Michael Waite, LSM, Downingtown East/Brotherly Love

Waite was a key contributor in Brotherly Love's midfield, working groundballs and helping in the clearing game. He makes good decisions on and off-ball.

Patrick Jameison, G, Conestoga/Brotherly Love

We haven't spoken much about on the field leadership, but definitely enjoyed what Jameison was doing in the cage calling a tight game and smartly directing his defense. He doesn't flinch and holds his line superbly.

Zach Hulme, A, Kennett/Brotherly Love

Hulme was a zippy lefty option for Brotherly Love. He moved with purpose from X to left topside. He's versatility showed, serving as a potential dodging threat, an off-ball cutter and an outlet for his midfield teammates.

Bret Bergey, A, Downingtown West/Brotherly Love

Another lefty outlet for Brotherly Love. Played with physicality, crashed the middle but also sloughed out and took the feed from his midfield. Can shoot with versatility and purpose.

Hill Plunkett, A, Roswell/Thunder LB3

Alex Lobel, A, Roswell/Thunder LB3

You could tell right away that these two are high school teammates. They share similar size, first step speed, quickness around the cage and versatile scoring ability. Usually you'd find

Lobel behind and Plunkett working right topside, but they could pick and set up a two-man game with each other to take advantage of matchups and create space. They captained LB3's offense down low.

Myles Quandt, FO, Roswell/Thunder LB3

Carson Hall FO, Harrison/THunder LB3

Another strong tandem that propelled the Thunder to Sunday's title game. Between the two Quandt, another Roswell recruit (very interested to see this team in the 2022 high school season) is probably the more polished of the two in technique. But they both showcased size, strong hands and the ability to push the ball upfield after wins.

Brayden Williams, G, Mill Creek/Thunder LB3

Williams showcased an active lefty stick, soft hands on the save and nice technique on low shots. He made timely stops for Thunder and moved the ball quickly to the offense on clears.

Donny Scott, D, The Hill Academy/Thunder LB3

Scott was a noticeable lockdown presence on the Thunder's right defensive wing. He has size and an active stick, looking for turnovers but also focused on his position. Liked his feet movement and ability to turn on the burners in a turnover/clear situation.

Niko Karetos, A, Pace Academy/Thunder LB3

Karetos' was the team's lefty attackman. Smooth around his side of the net, Karetos threaded several shots top shelf and in tight corner spots that I don't think many other guys could have made. Wasn't afraid to make the move inside and take the hit either.

Owen Duffy, A, St. Anthony's/Team 91 Bandits

Ranked No. 5 in NLFRankings.com's Class of 2023, Duffy was the top attackman prospect in his division on the day. He has a tremendous first step driving from X top topside right, and once he established his angle he could put the ball almost anywhere on net. Also showcased great IQ and footwork.

Leo Hoffman, M, Brunswick/Team 91 Bandits

Ranked No. 2 in the NLFRankings.com's Class of 2023, Hoffman didn't disappoint. He has a football runningback's instincts on offense, able to pick out holes, make a quick decision, maybe throw in a stutter step then burst to the cage. It's all complimented by a strong fundamental base and a powerful shot.

Glenn Platania, D, St. Anthony's/Team 91 Bandits

This is the type of guy you like to see roaming the middle of the field; smart, strong stick, ability to pick up the groundball and move it, helpful in the ride and strong on close defense.

Nicholas Elam, G, WRA/Resolute Black

Another strong lefty goalie making big saves for his team Sunday. Elam makes tough stops look effortless and can hit his clearing outlet on the dot. He has a particularly strong 'stab and corral' maneuver on the crease, important for avoiding rebound goals.

Luke Ray, M, Milford/Resolute Black

Ray's a quality midfielder who has a smooth way about him in the middle of the field. Nice ambidextrous technique allows him to attack from multiple scoring lanes.

Leonard Moore, A, McDonogh/Next Level Blue

Moore's a scoring threat from anywhere around the cage. He appears comfortable attacking from X, dodging and shooting topside or driving the alleys. In the moment he makes great decisions and isn't afraid to attack a longpole assignment. There's a lot of confidence built into his game.

Anthony Rinaldi, M, Bullis/Next Level Blue

A classic topside threat. He displays great vision from the top of the box, able to find the open cutter or drive (maybe even put a little shoulder in it) and make the shot himself.

Nicholas Schermer, LSM, Landon/Next Level Blue

Schermer showcases quick hands, fast feet, pursuit on groundballs and smarts on the clear. A classic LSM.

Tyler Owings, M, Boys' Latin/Crabs

You immediately notice Owings' height and length. Here's a guy who can muscle downhill and get the offense moving from uptop. Looking for him to continue to grow and utilize those traits as he continues to grow as a player.

Bradley Johnson, D, Calvert Hall/Crabs

Johnson showcased strong stick work and tenacity in the middle of the field. His potential growing size and strength are upside components to his repertoire.

AJ Marsh, D, McDonogh/Crabs

Ranked No. 21 on NLFRankings.com's Class of 2023. Again, physicality on display among the Crabs' defense. Another player who uses his size and length to command space and force opposing offensive players to do what he dictates.

Kyle Foster, D, Boys' Latin/Crabs

While several of the poles that stand out at tournament events are floats, Foster looks like the quintessential close defenseman. He's tall, physical, has some range to him but appears to do his best work posting up an opponent and dictating the action from there.

