Defense wins championships, and nowhere was that more evident than in the Women's DII Club Championship. Pittsburgh's defense was a little bit better, and they outlasted Severn River to an 8-0 victory.

"We knew about three of their players: 10, 8 and 14," Pittsburgh coach Anthony Chappie said of Meredith McCalister, Candace Coston and Carmer Farmer, respectively. "We adjusted our defense a little, moved our outside center Lauren Rosso to wing so she could mark their big 14. So wherever she was on the field, Rosso was there. We weren't going to have any of those three players beat us, and they didn't. We shut them down."

Severn River is a big, strong team, so it's a credit to the aforementioned players that Pittsburgh was concerned with them. And Severn didn't pull any punches, fought tooth and nail as Pittsburgh first took a 3-0 lead with a Barbara Woodbury penalty in the 6th minute, and then followed with a Jo Miller try in the 36th. Severn was able to instill some parity by stealing scrums, and Pittsburgh turned over ball better in the breakdowns.

"They're hurting but sucked it up," Chappie said. "We've been here before so we know what it takes. When we got the try in the first half, that picked up our spirits. They just knew they had to keep coming up and tackle, tackle, tackle. They knew it was going to be a defensive struggle, and we had to put a ton of pressure on them. I don't think they were used to that type of pressure, they made some mistakes and we got a couple of lucky breaks."

To be fair, neither side enjoyed a free-flowing game, but some of that may have been the referee's influence. An inordinate amount of penalties were called, similar to yesterday's match between Pittsburgh and Ft. Miami, which ended 3-0 in the Angels' favor. No offense could flourish.

"We were frustrated, but again, they know what it takes," Chappie said. "We have our chance here, and we knew it was all about defense. Our kicking was good in the first half, but in the second half the wind was against us. We really couldn't get it out, but we kicked well enough to relieve some pressure and buy some time. Their backs basically did nothing. Their 10 is a strong runner but we shut her down by putting two people on her every time."

Winning a DII championship is quite a feat – three games in three days – and some key players stepped up to lead the team to victory.

"We're always led by our captain, Jaime Filipek," Chappie said. "She's a phenomenal player. If she were bigger, I really believe she could play for the Eagles. Bean [Cline], our openside flanker and MVP, played unbelievably. She's all over the field and tackles like a man – hitting with shoulders and not grabbing shirts. Rosso marked their wing well, and fullback Donita Thomas had a great tournament. She sparked us offensively all weekend and all year."

It's fitting that Pittsburgh took this title home. Raleigh had been their only barrier of late preventing the trophy, and if the Angels missed out this year, it would have been devastating.

"All the credit goes to the girls," Chappie said. "They're out there in the snow, rain and all that other stuff. We don't practice in this nice weather. They put in the time and do the work. I just tell them what to do, and they go out and do it."