Written by Pat Clifton
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1823 leapfrogged Youngbloodz for first place in the Midwest 7s table by winning Cin City 7s Saturday in Cincinnati.

The Columbus, Ohio squad was dominant in each game leading to the final, defeating Bowling Green 34-0, the University of Kentucky 39-0 and Louisville 21-12 (1823 led 21-0 until late in the second half) in pool play. They blanked Indianapolis 29-0 in the semifinal.

The host Cincinnati Wolfhounds also dominated its pool, defeating Lexington 45-7, 1823 B 24-5 and Indianapolis 33-12. The hosts pitched a shutout in their semifinal, beating Lousiville 19-0.

The final would be the closest game of the day, by far, for Both 1823 and Cincinnati, which the visitors won 12-10.

Despite the win, 1823 coach Paul Holmes was displeased with his team's performance.

"It was an aggressive final. Our guys made a lot of mistakes taking it into contact, and it ended up being pretty much not a true 7s game, if that makes sense. I wasn't happy with some things, but that's alright. We got the win," he said.

"I think in the final we took a huge step backwards. It's been a problem with 1823. When we've gotten into any sort of final, our guys for some reason, they start getting a bit flatter, they don't get as deep, they start taking the ball into a lot more contact, which they shouldn't do, and they put themselves under a huge, huge amount of pressure."

On the contrary, Cincinnati coach Al Lucas seemed pleased with the Wolfhounds' second-place finish. They struggled last season on the 7s circuit, but Lucas says they're hoping to improve this summer.

"Last year we had a lot of guys banged up after 15s who took some time off, and this year we're more healthy," he said.

"We'e looking to make a run this year. We did pretty well two years ago and took a step back last year, but we have several newcomers, so I'm pretty pleased with where we are. This weekend, with three teams in the tournament, I had a chance to evaluate 24 serious 7s players, and we have alot more depth than last year."

The win gives 1823 14 series points, double that of second-place Youngbloodz, but what does that mean?

"Absolutely nothing. We won the MIdwest last year and came in fifth in the championships," said Holmes. "Us leading doesn't mean anything."

Displeased with the lack of quality competition at Cin City, Holmes is taking 1823 to Chicago for

Firehouse 7s this weekend in search of more equitable sparring matches.

"Because of what I call our poor performance in Cincinnati is the reason we're going to Firehouse," he said. "We'll be there this weekend with the Lions and Milwaukee and Youngbloodz and everyone else. We need it."

In addition to the qualifier bracket, Cin City featured men's open, women's and high school competitions.

Quallifier
1st 1823
2nd Cincinnati
3rd Lousiville
4th Indianapolis

High School
1st Louisville
2nd Teen Wolf

Women's
1st Northern Indiana Ninjas
2nd Cincinnati

Men's Open
1st Knoxville Possums
2nd South Side Catamarans