

## Dartmouth Wins CRC Thriller

Written by Alex Goff and Jackie Finlan  
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Coming off a 17-12 defeat of Utah, Dartmouth had to feel confident facing the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame at the USA 7s Collegiate Rugby Championships in Philadelphia.

But they aren't called the Fighting Irish for nothing, as Notre Dame made Dartmouth work for everything in an exciting 24-19 Big Green win.

For two minutes early on, Dartmouth worked the ball down to Notre Dame's end and looked so very patient before Chris Downer finished off the effort with a dive-over try in the corner. Dartmouth led 5-0.

Then it was 10-0 as Nick Downer helped set up the next try from midfield, eating up ground he is absolutely slammed in the tackle but still manages to put some distance on his pass to Tanner Scott. The wing outraces everyone 40 meters to the corner.

Scott did much the same moments later, this time the try gets converted by Downer.

But Notre Dame started to build some good movements. Nick Severyn got the first try, finishing off a nice series of offloading. The try started when Dartmouth blew over a ruck inside their 22-meter-line, but no one claimed the ball and it lay there, exposed, for Notre Dame to steal.

17-5 at halftime.

"As we all know, an end-of-half, end-of-game try can make a huge difference," said Dartmouth

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Head Coach Alex Magleby.

And that it did. Kevin Ritt scored for Notre Dame and with Andy O'Connor's conversion it was 17-12. Then, with Ritt in the blood bin after a nasty hit, O'Connor sliced through for the tying try. His conversion put Notre Dame ahead, much to the delight of the vociferous Irish supporters.

But the final say was Dartmouth's. Notre Dame's Muhammed Abdul-Shakoor was hauled down after a long run, and Dartmouth countered, finally getting the ball into the hands of TJ Cameron for the try.

Dartmouth had escaped. Just.

"We knew it was going to be touch and go," said Dartmouth Head Coach Alex Magleby, as he prepared to take his team out of the sun and back to their hotel for a break. "At the end of the half there we gave up a bit of possession and made a couple of mistakes."

Magleby said the situation was the opposite against Utah, where all his team needed was some possession to score some tries.

Against Notre Dame, it was the Irish that dominated ball control.

"They kept the ball real nicely for a long stretch of time and scored on us," said Magleby. "We had some new guys in there in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half and they made some uncharacteristic decisions. In the end we escaped against a good Notre Dame team."

Magleby said Dartmouth looked good in moments, but the players – some new to rugby – are still learning.

"It was a learning experience for us and in no way was it a comprehensive game for us."