Philadelphia - When predicting the final for the USA Sevens Collegiate Rugby Championship, no one put Dartmouth in the final - or Army for that matter - except for the Big Green themselves. But after its 24-12 semifinal victory over Central Washington, everyone has realized that Dartmouth deserves a spot in the title match.

Tanner Scott had two tries against CWU (Marvin Dangerfield photo)

"We have some great athletes on this team who are willing to fight for all 14 minutes - all 20 minutes in the final," Dartmouth's Chris Downer said. "No one takes one play off; you do that, and they'll go 100 meters and score a try."

Downer embodied that hardworking mentality to a tee, scoring two well earned tries. Early on, Downer spun and powered through a couple defenders meters out from the try line, forcing CWU to be more disciplined in the tackle. It would be an issue for CWU all game long, and Dartmouth was able to slip through the defense on multiple occasions.

CWU answered back minutes later when Tim Stanfill took advantage of an uncharacteristic hole in the defense, when one Dartmouth player shot forward attempting to pick off a pass. Stanfill hit the gap and looked to score, but tripped up when trying to cut back inside. CWU earned a penalty in the breakdown. The referee wasn't watching the tap, which looked to knock forward out of the ballcarrier's hand. Nonetheless, it worked to Aaron Lee, who spun his way into the try zone. Lee's conversion made it 7-5 CWU.

Dartmouth's Nick Downer gave it a go and was rewarded with a linebreaking run that eventually put brother Chris in position to get his second try, which Nick converted, 12-7.

Tanner Scott added his name to the try-scoring lists moments later, when a CWU lineout went long and Dartmouth turned on the attack so quickly. The wing hit second gear at the right moment and motored in untouched, 17-7.

In the second half, CWU was working a nice attacking phase in Dartmouth's end. In one swift move, Scott finished off a Downer break for the breakaway try, which broke CWU's spirits, 24-7 with the Nick Downer conversion.

Patrick Blair added a try in the final minutes when a clumped Dartmouth defense opened up some room, but the game was essentially over at that point.

"We knew it'd take six games to get to the final, and we thought that if we could build from every performance that we'd have a shot at the national title," Downer said. "we put ourselves in that position so hopefully it will come together this afternoon.

"[Coach] Magleby will have some film and break down their strengths and weaknesses," Downer said when looking ahead to Army, "but we're focused on what we can control."

The final kicks off at 5:20 p.m.