RUGBYMag CRC MVP and All-Tournament Team

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Chris and Nick. It seems there is no one without the other. The twins who helped engineer Dartmouth's run to a CRC title are, of course, alike in many ways (but not completely). They are, however, sufficiently indistinguishable as to make it impossible for us to say one is better.

Actually we asked them which one is the better play … they just laughed. So to our CRC co-MVPs, Chris and Nick Downer, congratulations, and also to our All-CRC team.

"We've played every sport together for so long that we know each other's tendencies," explained Chris. "Obviously I can't read what he's thinking on the field but I know generally what he's going to do and where he's going to go, and he sets me up for a lot of my tries."

"With only seven players on the field, it makes it a lot easier when you have a twin brother on the field wi9th you," added Nick. "I know where he's going to be in support and stuff, so it's a pleasure playing with him and I think we make each other better on the field."

The Downers connected on a crucial first-half score that, in retrospect, put the game away. Nick make the first surge and drawing the defenders before passing to Chris for the coup de grace. They finish each other's breaks … and sentences.

"It was unbelievable," said Nick. "To get a chance to be on this stage, on NBC, and in this lovely stadium –"

"And to beat Army for the first time in ten years or so, means a lot to all of us –"

"And for a national championship too, it's icing on the cake."

For our All-CRC team, we picked players who made an impact, but also players who track to have an impact at a higher level. Some good teams had few representatives, not because their players were bad, but because they just put together a good team game and used their resources wisely.

Some teams with poor records have representatives, also. Those players simply demonstrated great ability, and, we expect, will be even better on a stronger outfit.

Here, then, is our RUGBYMag.com All-CRC Men's Team:
(*=player can play either forward or back)

CO-MVPs: Chris Downer, Nick Downer (both backs)

Other Backs:
Will Holder Army
Dave Geib Army
Don Pati Utah *
Ben Leatigaga Army *
Tim Stanfill*
Peter Tiberio
Tonata Lauti

Forwards
Nate Ebner*
Nate Brakeley
Tanner Scott*
Blaine Scully*
Seamus Siefring

Comments on the picks:
Nick Downer. Classic playmaker. Very unselfish. Knows what he's going to do, including when tackled (which is a rarity).

Chris Downer. Shifty runner with pace … and a finisher.

Will Holder. Long legged, smooth-striding back with all kinds of skills. Good passer.

Dave Geib. The unsung hero of the Army effort. Played outstanding defense and was excellent in support.

Don Pati. Can create space on his own, and has the acceleration and confidence to exploit it. Not tall, but enormously powerful. Could be a hooker in 7s.

Ben Leatigaga. Improved his 7s play immensely and does a good job of taking gaps when they are there, and making the ball available when they are not.

Tim Stanfill. Speedy and daring player – a trait not unuseful in this game.

Peter Tiberio. Saturday was brilliant. Blink and he's somewhere else.

Tonata Lauti. Wild, sidestepping running style that can make defenses look bad. A little more time and discipline, and a few more sandwiches, and he will be that much better.

Nate Ebner. Powerful athlete with good passing skills and vision. Took too much on his shoulders for Ohio State, but with his ability it's hard to blame him.

Nate Brakeley. Very big, rangy forward who covers ground and packs a punch (not literally) when he hits. Was penalized for not wrapping one time when really he had powered into his foe so aggressively the guy just bounced out of his grasp.

Tanner Scott. Not as tall or big as Brakeley, he being speed and a huge upside.

Blaine Scully. Excellent in almost all aspects. Has the speed to play in the backs, of course, and the power to be a forward.

Seamus Siefring. Completely uncompromising player who cleared out and played defense with utter unselfishness.