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Photo by Tracy Dreslinsk
 Troy Athens junior Josh Oswald tries to run past a Warren De La Salle defender in a game earlier this season. The Red Hawks have made a habit of running through opponents in the postseason in recent years.

That time of year

Troy Athens and Troy High boys lacrosse battle in playoffs

By Christian Davis
 C & G Sports Writer

Troy Athens boys lacrosse coach Nick Stensen said he can tell what time of the year it is just by the look on his players' faces.

It's playoff time, and more often than not, that means it's the Red Hawks' time to shine.

Athens, 9-5 overall, has won eight straight regional championships and took their first step toward nine with a 14-2 victory against Romeo High May 20 at home in a Division 1 regional quarterfinal.

"I do see another level with the kids," Stensen said of postseason play. "Their attitudes — they are mentally more focused. They have a lot of things going on in their lives, and they're able to bring the focus needed to the field and to the games."

Stensen added that the squad hasn't peaked yet, but it does continue to get better and learn from each game.

"It's always a learning process. ... We're putting a few more aces in our pocket, I guess," he said.

Athens played Macomb L'Anse Creuse North May 27 in a semifinal, after press time. A win there, and Athens is in another final against either Novi Detroit Catholic Central or Utica Eisenhower at 7 p.m. May 29 at Troy High.

Colts kicking at the end

The Troy High boys lacrosse season came to an end, but not before coach Matt Jantz received a preview of what may be in store next year.

The Colts had just three seniors with experience on the squad that finished 2-16 overall.

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“We were a very young team,” Jantz said. “Next year, we’ll have 20-plus juniors that are going to be seniors, and I think that experience level should help us be more competitive.”

Troy’s final game was a loss to Novi Detroit Catholic Central May 21 at Central in the second round of a Division 1 regional.

But it was the contest in the first round of the region that left the Colts something to cheer about. After losing 8-2 to Royal Oak High 11 days earlier, the Colts beat the Ravens on the road 8-7.

“I think we were just more prepared, and we actually pulled up a couple JV players for the playoffs and they were able to contribute. They were also able to help in practice and prepare us,” the coach said.

“Everything seemed to be clicking. It was good to see them go out there and do things that we knew they could do.”

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