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[Salem State, Endicott, Gordon combine forces to form 'North Shore Cup'](#)

By Phil Stacey Sports editor

- From now on, whenever Salem State University and Endicott College meet on the soccer pitch — or in any other athletic venue — they'll be doing so not only to win, but to also gain points for their school towards the North Shore Cup standings. The same holds true when either institution plays against another neighboring school, Gordon College.
Deborah Parker



It makes sense on so many levels.

That's one of the primary reasons why the athletic programs at Salem State University, Gordon College in Wenham and Endicott College in Beverly have teamed up to create "The North Shore Cup."

The concept for the Cup is simple — get the schools to play games in most, if not all sports, against each other and assign point values to those contests based on who wins (3 points), ties (2 points) or suffers a loss (1 point). A formula of points earned divided by the total points available will be used to name the winner of the North Shore Cup at the conclusion of each academic year.

"For starters, I think it's a natural regional rivalry between the three schools," said Tim Shea, the Director of Athletics at Salem State. "Adding this competition to the rivalry will up the ante a little bit on all the campuses — and hopefully across the entire North Shore."

Shea's Salem State teams play both Endicott and Gordon in many sports already — "80 percent, I'd guess," he said — but now will look to schedule even more non-league meetings against their fellow North Shore institutions.

Endicott and Gordon already face off against each other on a frequent basis as members of The Commonwealth Coast Conference, but now these meetings will take on added meaning.

"We're excited about this," said Endicott's Director of Athletics Brian Wylie. "It gives each school to have some bragging rights athletically on the North Shore, and it's great exposure for three great institutions to show off our student-athletes."

According to Wylie, it was Shea who took the lead on this project and approached Wylie and Gordon College Athletic Director Jonathan Tymann about it. Once all the parameters were hammered out between the three schools, the North Shore Cup was put into motion this fall.

To date, there have been 18 contests played between two of the three schools this fall. Interestingly enough, each school won one of the three games played on the first day of competition back on Sept. 1: Salem State in men's soccer (1-0 over Gordon), Endicott in women's soccer (2-0 over SSU) and Gordon in field hockey (2-1 over SSU).

So far Endicott has earned 26 of a possible 33 points in North Shore Cup games, giving them 78 percent of possible points earned. Salem State is in second place in the standings at 66 percent (24 out of 36 possible points), followed closely by Gordon at 56 percent (22 out of 39 possible points).

"If you look at the Beanpot or any other college tournament or rivalry rich in tradition," said Wylie, "well, this is our chance to build on that tradition. It gives all three schools something we can hang our hats on."

Many of the student-athletes, said Shea, know each other from playing against each other on high school, club or all-star teams growing up.

"I know for a fact that many of our kids know their kids, especially at Endicott," said Shea, who is hoping to reinstate the Vikings' rivalry with Gordon in women's basketball, which was ended in recent years after having played each other for close to 30 straight seasons.

"As the athletes on each campus buy into it, my hope would be that you'll see more college kids attending our games and that it will generate more interest, leading to bigger crowds. And I can see, especially as we go through the year, if we're in the spring and playing one of those two schools in, say, baseball or softball and it could determine who wins the Cup, that'd be terrific."

The actual "North Shore Cup" trophy has not been solidified yet, but Wylie and Shea said they'd like it to represent something that parallels what the North Shore is all about.