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Rivera, Becker spark Lawrenceville School field hockey to win over Hun

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By **Anthony Coleman/The Times**

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LAWRENCE — Nikki Rivera is still 5 feet tall; she still has that blazing speed.

However, the senior midfielder on the Lawrenceville School field hockey team added some things to her repertoire.

"I played a lot of field hockey over the summer," Rivera, a second-team All-Prep selection by The Times last season, said. "I've really been training to gain skills and to have better approaches to the game. I've been working, wanting to set a good example for my team and really step it up this year. I definitely relied a lot on my speed last year. This year, I've been working on stickwork and strong hits."



Anthony Coleman/The Times

Nikki Rivera scored a goal as Lawrenceville downed Hun, 4-1.

Rivera and linemate Eliza Becker form a dominating midfield combination. The improvement of each as a player was on display yesterday as the Big Red fended off Hun, 4-1.

Rivera and Becker each scored a goal with Becker adding an assist as Times-area No. 2 Lawrenceville improved to 8-1.

"We've been playing together for a while, so we really work well together," Becker, who has committed to Dartmouth, said. "We are always looking for passes, trying to make the game as fast as possible by moving the ball. We play with the same mindset."

Rivera and Becker's play in the middle limited Hun (4-3) to four shots (with Carey Million scoring on a penalty corner) while earning nine corners to Hun's two. The co-captains' strong play helped set up goals by Maddie Jones and Morgan Pothast in the first half. Becker added a sweet goal in the second half to make it 3-1 when, after the restart outside the top of the circle, she dribbled around one defender and let loose a wrist shot for her third of the season.

"They are totally different in terms of style," head coach Lisa Ewanchyna said. "Eliza is more classically trained. She's steady; she's solid. Nikki is explosive and dynamic. And that's not to say the either can't be the other. It's just that when you need something, they both know how to come up with it."

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