



HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Campbell boys beat Grayson 1-0 in Class 6A final to win first soccer championship



Campbell players (in black) work to clear the ball from their defensive zone in the closing seconds of a 1-0 victory over Grayson in the Class 6A boys soccer championship game at McEachern High School on May 15, 2025.

By Chip Saye

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Junior Gavin Banks scored the game's only goal with 14:18 remaining in the second half to give Campbell a 1-0 victory over Grayson in the Class 6A boys soccer state championship game Thursday night at McEachern High School in Powder Springs.

The victory gave Campbell its first state championship in soccer and its first in any sport in six years. The Spartans' previous state titles came in slow-pitch softball (1994) and girls track and field (2019). Campbell lost to Kennesaw Mountain 2-0 in last year's soccer championship game.

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Banks, making the most of added playing time that came his way when a starter was injured last week, took a pass from Trey Cline on the left side of the goal and put it home for the

game-winner. Cline had collected a rebound off a shot that was deflected by Grayson goalkeeper Danny Muhic.

“We ended up having an injury; our left back got hurt against Duluth [in the semifinals],” Campbell coach Troy Connolly said. “We waited all week, and Gavin trained as a starter. We can put him anywhere. He started as a wing back for us. He got slid into a center back for this game, and then he gets put in as a striker and ends up getting the game-winning goal. He’s an absolutely incredible player. He hasn’t always gotten the playing time he would’ve gotten in other programs because we have a stacked roster, but he always comes to the field, puts his head down and works his butt off.”

Grayson (21-2), a consensus top-five team nationally, just missed on a couple of great opportunities to take the lead. Manidou Camara fired a shot from about 20 yards that went just high of the net and hit the football goal crossbar less than seven minutes into the game, and a crossing pass in front of the net was just out of reach of Tolu Adeyemi’s header attempt midway through the second half.

The Rams continued to apply pressure in the game’s closing minutes but were unable to find the opening for a tying goal.

Campbell (15-6) started the season 2-5, with losses to Pope, North Atlanta, North Cobb, Sprayberry and Carrollton, but got hot when region play began on March 10. The Spartans went 13-1 the rest of the way, losing only to Pebblebrook in a game that determined the Region 3 champion. Campbell beat Heritage-Conyers, Lambert, Discovery and Duluth to reach the final.

“I’m so proud of this group, this team, this program,” Connolly said as his team was showering him with water from a cooler. “Last year, we made a massive run, and nobody expected us to get that far. Coming into his game, if you had asked anybody that was not with our program, they would’ve said that Grayson would have beaten us and beaten us handily.

“So we came in here with a chip on our shoulders and I think shocked a lot of people. The fact that this program isn’t getting the respect it deserves is ridiculous, but I’m so proud of these boys and this program that we’ve been able to build.”

About the Author
