

A soccer title for the taking

Written by Steve Ostermann
Wednesday, 25 May 2011 15:59

Top-ranked Grafton girls set to grab first NSC crown after two more wins extend unbeaten streak to 20 games

History is within the grasp of the Grafton girls' soccer team.

By winning their final two regular-season games this week, the Black Hawks will capture their first North Shore Conference title in the sport.

With victories over Port Washington on Tuesday and Cedarburg on Thursday, coach Don Arnold's squad would wrap up NSC play with a first-place, 6-0-1 mark.

"It would be a great accomplishment for the girls, but first we have to win two tough games," Arnold said.

"We can do it, but it won't be easy."

But it will be quite doable for the Hawks, who last week improved their season record to 18-1-3, stretched their unbeaten streak to 20 games and moved into the No. 1 spot among Division 1 teams in the Wisconsin Soccer Coaches Association's state poll.

The Hawks put themselves in the driver's seat for their first soccer title in the league's 26-year history by scoring a pair of impressive road wins last week.

After edging first-place Germantown on May 17, Grafton blanked Nicolet, 3-0, two days later to improve to 4-0-1 in the conference.

Juniors Hannah Eichler and Carley Pfannerstill provided most of the offensive spark for the Hawks.

Eichler had two goals, starting with a score off a cross from Pfannerstill in the 17th minute.

In the second half, the pair collaborated again, with Eichler finding the net at 43 minutes. Pfannerstill capped the scoring in the 75th minute with a goal off a through ball from Alyssa Arnold.

Grafton 1, Germantown 0

Angie Mann's goal in the 51st minute gave the Hawks all the scoring they needed in a hard-fought victory.

The sophomore forward followed up a shot by Eichler that deflected off the Germantown keeper.

"It was a very tough game against a young, talented team," coach Arnold said. "Both teams

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battled back and forth.

“We came out on our heels early in the second half, but then we stepped it up.”

Grafton finished with eight shots on goal to Germantown’s four.

Germantown fell to 4-1-0 in league play and 8-3-1 overall.

A win over last-place Port on Tuesday will give the Hawks a shot at an undisputed title when they host Cedarburg at 7 p.m. Thursday.