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Wednesday, 12 September 2012 16:21

Late 2-0 deficit no sweat for Grafton boys as they rally to stun Slinger in double OT

Few things in sports are as exhilarating as a comeback win.

In fact, Grafton boys' soccer coach Don Arnold didn't hesitate to call his team's 3-2 victory over Slinger in double overtime Sept. 6 one of its best ever.

"It was a fantastic win. The guys had to really dig down to pull that one out," Arnold said.

"It will go down as one of the best wins in team history."

Despite piling up a 35-9 edge in shots for the game, Grafton found itself trailing, 2-0, with 20 minutes left in regulation.

The host Owls appeared to be in control after scoring in the 42nd and 60th minutes.

However, the Black Hawks suddenly sharpened their shooting touch. In the 63rd minute, Willie McElligott scored off a ball sent into the box by Ben Lorge.

Two minutes later, Jake Wilde tied the game with a header off a corner kick from Jacob Kellett.

After neither team found the net again in regulation, the game moved into overtime. One 10-minute period was followed by another that was less than one minute away from producing a draw.

But with 52 seconds left, Kellett broke free for an unassisted shot from 33 yards out that beat the Slinger keeper. A frenzied Grafton celebration ensued, quickly spilling from the bench to the field.

“We were really pressing them in overtime,” Arnold said. “We had three or four shots go off the crossbar before Jake got one through.”

Besides improving the Hawks’ season record to 5-3, the win was their third straight and kept them on a roll entering a busy stretch this week.

“I think our team is kind of coming together a little bit,” Arnold said. “The kids are up and excited about the way they’re playing now.”

Grafton 6, Homestead 2

A scoring blitz by McElligott sparked the Hawks in an impressive North Shore Conference win at home Sept. 4.

The senior scored four goals, including three straight in a 22-minute stretch during the second half.

“Willie had a fantastic game. He was moving well off the ball and kept getting himself into scoring position,” Arnold said.

Grafton held a 2-0 lead at halftime. After Jake Demerath scored with an assist from McElligott, Kellett set up McElligott’s first goal.

Homestead scored in the 46th minute, but the Hawks responded with a hat-trick run by McElligott that built a 5-1 lead by the 68th minute. Alex Lorbecki capped the Hawks’ scoring.

Credited with second-half assists for Grafton were Kellett, Adam Huibregste, Matt Salm and Andrew Best.

This week, the Hawks faced Nicolet on Tuesday and will play a 7 p.m. road game Thursday against Wauwatosa East.

This weekend, Grafton will participate in the Appleton Xavier Invitational, starting with a 7 p.m. game Friday against Eau Claire North. The Hawks will continue tournament play with two games Saturday.

On Sept. 18, Grafton will host Whitefish Bay at 7 p.m.

Pirates take 2nd in home tournament

The Port Washington boys’ soccer team scored its first win of the season on the way to runner-up honors in a home quadrangular last weekend.

After defeating Platteville/Lancaster, 2-1, in Friday's semifinals, the Pirates were edged by Madison Edgewood, 1-0, on Saturday.

"We played pretty well both days," Port coach Mike Bultman said. "I think we're starting to figure some things out."

Edgewood scored in the 30th minute and hung on for the win in a defensive struggle.

"It was back and forth," Bultman said.

"Edgewood got a decent goal on us. They're a good team."

Edgewood advanced to the title game by defeating Luxemburg-Casco, 3-2, on Friday.

Against Platteville/Lancaster, Port rallied to prevail in the final minute. Junior forward Mason Purtell scored the winner with an assist from Tyler Shultis.

The Pirates took a 1-0 lead on a goal by Marcos Rodriguez in the 15th minute and maintained the edge until well into the second half. Platteville/Lancaster drew even with a goal at 57 minutes.

But Port mounted a late attack, leading to Purtell's clutch score.

"It was a win, which was good. We didn't back down," Bultman said.

The tournament left the Pirates with a 1-7-1 season record.

Nicolet 4, Port Washington 1

A halftime lead faded for the Pirates in a North Shore Conference home loss Sept. 4.

Port jumped ahead in the 10th minute on a goal by Rodriguez, assisted by Purtell, and maintained the edge until the second period.

However, Nicolet went on a four-goal flurry in an 11-minute span, starting with a score at 50 minutes. A penalty kick put the Knights ahead to stay.

"It was a physical game, and Nicolet was more physical than us," Bultman said.

"But the first half was easily our best half of the season."

This week, the Pirates played Whitefish Bay on Tuesday and will host Brown Deer in a 7 p.m. nonconference match Thursday.

On Saturday, Port will play in the Sheboygan Falls Invitational at 9 a.m. The Pirates will face Manitowoc Lincoln, Howards Grove and Sheboygan Falls.

The Pirates will resume NSC play Sept. 18 with a 7 p.m. home game against Germantown.

Image Information: GRAFTON'S JAKE DEMERATH battled a Homestead player for possession of the ball during their teams' North Shore Conference game last week. Grafton rolled to a 6-2 win. Photo by Sam Arendt