

Misfires aside, Grafton girls' soccer team finds way to defend championship in Pewaukee Cup tournament

Not all victories can be things of beauty.

The Grafton girls' soccer team knows the feeling, especially after returning home with a championship trophy last weekend.

Although the Black Hawks were continually frustrated by missed scoring opportunities, they managed to successfully defend its title at the annual Pewaukee Lady Pirate Cup tournament.

"It was nice to win it, but it was frustrating, too, because we should have been much cleaner and smoother in the way we played," said Grafton coach Don Arnold, whose team defeated Pewaukee, 2-1, in Saturday's championship game.

"We created a ton of scoring opportunities, but we didn't finish them. That's been a problem all season for us."

In the championship game, the Hawks piled up a 35-6 edge in shots but didn't find the net until the second half.

Sophomore forward Hannah Eichler broke a scoreless tie in the 46th minute when she converted a follow-up on a ball teammate Carley Pfannerstill drove off the Pewaukee goalkeeper.

Six minutes later, Grafton stretched the margin to 2-0 on a goal by Emma Fatla. Hannah Knauer slipped a pass through the defense to set up the score.

The Pirates fought back and pulled within one goal by scoring off a free kick in the 63rd minute. They had several other scoring chances in the remaining time but couldn't crack the Grafton defense, which was anchored by sweeper Audrey Dickmann and keeper Alissa Viste.

"We had 35 shots, but most of them were not hard hit at the keeper," Arnold said. "We have to come at them hard and put more on the ball."

Grafton, which improved its season record to 10-4-2, opened the four-team tournament with a 3-0 win over Kenosha St. Joseph on Friday.

The Hawks posted a 38-2 edge in shots for the game but managed only a 1-0 lead at halftime.

Eichler scored with an assist from Alyssa Arnold in the 29th minute.

In the second half, Ali Lorge added a pair of goals, with assists from Pfannerstill at 41 minutes and Tess Safstrom at 59 minutes.

Whitefish Bay 3, Grafton 1

Winning ugly

Written by Steve Ostermann
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The Hawks' shot at the North Shore Conference title took a major blow with a hard-fought road loss May 4.

First-place Bay, one of the state's top-ranked Division 1 teams, grabbed a 1-0 lead in the 26th minute on a goal by Lydia Kaminsky.

Grafton drew even at 54:30 when Angie Mann scored off a long throw-in by Molly McElligott.

However, the Blue Dukes regained control with goals in the 61st and 67th minutes.

"We were disappointed in losing, but we never stopped playing hard," Arnold said. "We gave ourselves several good scoring chances even after we fell behind by two goals."

The loss dropped Grafton's third-place conference record to 2-1-1. Bay improved to 4-0.

This week, the Hawks were scheduled to face Milwaukee Lutheran on Tuesday and will play nonconference games at Hartford at 5 p.m.

Thursday and at home against Whitefish Bay Dominican at 7 p.m. Friday.

On May 18, Grafton will resume NSC play by hosting Germantown at 7 p.m.

Port Washington 2, Brown Deer 1 (2 OT)

Bre McDonald's goal with four minutes left in the second overtime lifted the Pirates, who rallied for their first victory of the season in a nonconference road game May 5.

McDonald, a junior midfielder, took a pass and cut through the Brown Deer defense to net the winner.

"It was a big lift for us," said Port coach Sean O'Brien, whose team improved to 1-6 overall. "Our captains (McDonald and Katie Barrows) really stepped up."

Port trailed, 1-0, at halftime and didn't pull even until the 60th minute when Barrows, a senior midfielder, scored off a pass from Jessica Donoian.

Both teams had numerous scoring chances, with Brown Deer holding a 14-11 edge in shots.

Goalkeeper Alexa Pallo helped keep the Pirates in contention with 13 saves.

Milwaukee Lutheran 4, Port Washington 1

The Pirates scored their first goal of the season but couldn't prevent another loss in a North Shore Conference road game May 4.

Sophomore Caity Tydrick snapped Port's offensive drought with a goal in the 58th minute that cut Lutheran's lead to 3-1. The score was the Pirates' first in six games.

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However, the Red Knights countered with a goal in the 62nd minute.

“Lutheran’s speed caught us a little off guard in that game,” O’Brien said.

The loss dropped Port to 0-4 in league play.

The Pirates’ nonconference road game against Whitnall scheduled for last Friday was postponed due to inclement weather.

They were scheduled to resume NSC play against Cedarburg on Tuesday and will travel to Homestead on May 18 for another league game at 7 p.m.