

## OVAC Soccer Cup



Photos by Alex Kozlowski

Above, Linsly's Zack Turak, right, tries to control the ball while Brooke's Chad Vargo (8) closes in during their championship game of the high school boys' OVAC Cup Tournament Monday evening at Wheeling Island. Below, Wheeling Park's Emily Ellwood (4) goes up for a header as John Marshall's Jaimie Merinar (15) defends during the girls' final.

# Cup Champions

### Linsly boys, Wheeling Park girls notch wins at OVAC Tournament

By JOSH STROPE  
Staff Writer

Linsly entered the OVAC Cup Tournament with a chip on its shoulder.

Favored a year ago, the Cadets faced off against Brooke looking for their fifth straight OVAC Cup Championship.

Instead, the Bruins walked away with the title.

This year was different, as Linsly dominated the entire tournament and exacted a measure of revenge by defeating Brooke 2-0 at Wheeling Island Stadium.

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"It's called the Brooke curse," Brooke coach Eric Fries said. "Fluke things just happen in this stadium."

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From there, the Cadets used their speed to

keep the ball away from the Bruins and control the momentum of the game.

Linsly coach Randy Shah captures the OVAC Cup title in just his first year as coach, but wanted none of the credit.

"The captains are the real leaders of this team, I didn't do anything out here tonight," Shah said.

One of those captains, Sawtarie, was held scoreless for the first time this tournament after scoring six goals in the previous two games.

He had a golden chance on a penalty kick in the second half, but the shot sailed wide-right. Sawtarie did contribute with assists on both goals.

"This was important because we came out here and laid an egg last year," Sawtarie said.

Linsly goalkeeper Thomas Reihner made four saves in the victory.

"We came out in preseason and this was our goal," Reihner said. "It feels great to have won this thing."

While Reihner had a relatively easy day, Whitehead had his hands full on the other side. The junior netminder had 11 saves, with every one seemingly forcing him to dive to make the save.



Please See CUP, Page 18

# Cup

(Continued from Page 15)

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"We gave 110 percent tonight and we played with all our hearts," Bruin forward Josh Whitt said.

"We played the best we could have tonight."

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"It's kind of natural now, so we knew we had to play hard, and our defense stepped up, and everyone from our midfielders to our forwards contributed to the win."

## GIRLS

### Wheeling Park 2, John Marshall 0

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"I didn't think about it until I read the paper the other day and realized what was at stake," he said. "I'm pretty short at 5-4, and I was starting to feel a little smaller."

The first-year coach had nothing to worry about as the Patriots won their ninth straight OVAC Cup by beating John Marshall at Wheeling Island Stadium Monday.

While John Marshall entered the tournament as the No. 1 seed, it was Wheeling Park considered the favorites.

"They are the team to beat and who everyone was gunning for," Monarchs coach Cindy Lawther said.

The Patriots may have faced their toughest road to the title in the past nine years, having to go through Linsly, Weir, and John Marshall.

The girls defended their crown with solid defense, not

allowing a single goal the entire tournament.

"We continued to work the ball down the field and never allowed tough shots on Jenna (Forzano), who played great in net," Thomas said.

Not bad for someone who never played goalie before this season.

"She had an injury that prevented her from playing the field so we tried her in net," Thomas said. "She's done such a fantastic job."

Forzano had eight saves, five on John Marshall senior Jaimie Merinar.

After a scoreless first half, Park's Jenny Aderholt stole the ball from a Monarch defender and raced towards the goal. Aderholt fired the ball past John Marshall goalie Nikki O'Brian for the game's first goal 15 minutes into the second half.

Minutes later, a free kick by Merinar outside the Wheeling Park penalty box looked to tie the game, but Forzano caught the ball with her fingertips for the save.

Merinar had another chance after a cross from Shayna Varner, but Forzano was there again for the stop.

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to go, taking a pass from Katelyn Gompers and putting the ball in the lower left corner for the 2-0 lead.

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According to Lawther, the loss looked similar to 2-0 loss to Wheeling Park earlier in the season. With sectionals looming around the corner, she just hopes her nine seniors get one more crack at Wheeling Park.

"We would like to see them again, but next time we will need to be more patient," Lawther said.

As for the Patriots, a decade of dominance will follow them into the tournament next year, but is it conceivable they could possibly lose?

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◆◆◆  
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L — Goals: Chapman, Turak; Assists: Sawterie 2; Goalkeeper: Reihner (4 saves). B — Goalkeeper: Whitehead (11 saves).  
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SUNDAY, SEPT. 25, 2005

# Bruins don't feel pressure heading into OVAC Cup

By AARON PETCHAL  
Sports writer

WEIRTON — It is once again time for the annual boys Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Cup Soccer Tournament.

Last year, the Brooke boys won the tournament.

Bruins coach Eric Fries said winning the title last year does not put any added pressure on his team this season.

"I don't think we are feeding off of what we did last year," he said. "It is almost a brand new team, so you can't say we are feeding off of it and we don't feel like we have to defend anything. I think it is the heart of who we are making our own character."

"I talk about stuff from last year just as a positive in what we can use from them to grow from this season, but this team is totally different. It is a different makeup. It is a different style. It is a different team. You have to deal with them that way, and they are growing into that role and they are really doing their best."

This year is the 15th installment of the tournament, and the boys begin play at 5:30 p.m. Monday at Weir High School. Eight teams qualified for the tournament based on how they finished in their respective divisional play.

In Division I, Linsly claimed the championship with a record of 5-0, and the Cadets are the top seed in the tournament. Brooke placed second in the division with a 4-1 record and are the second seed. Wheeling Park is seeded third with a divisional record of 2-2-1. Zanesville is seeded fourth with a division-

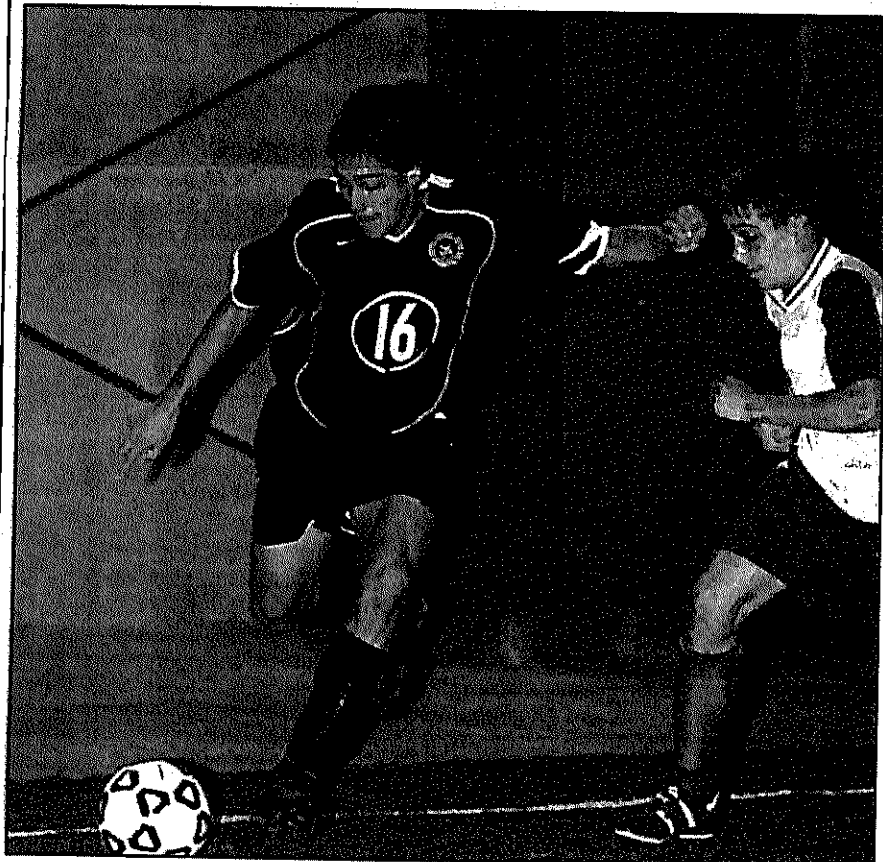
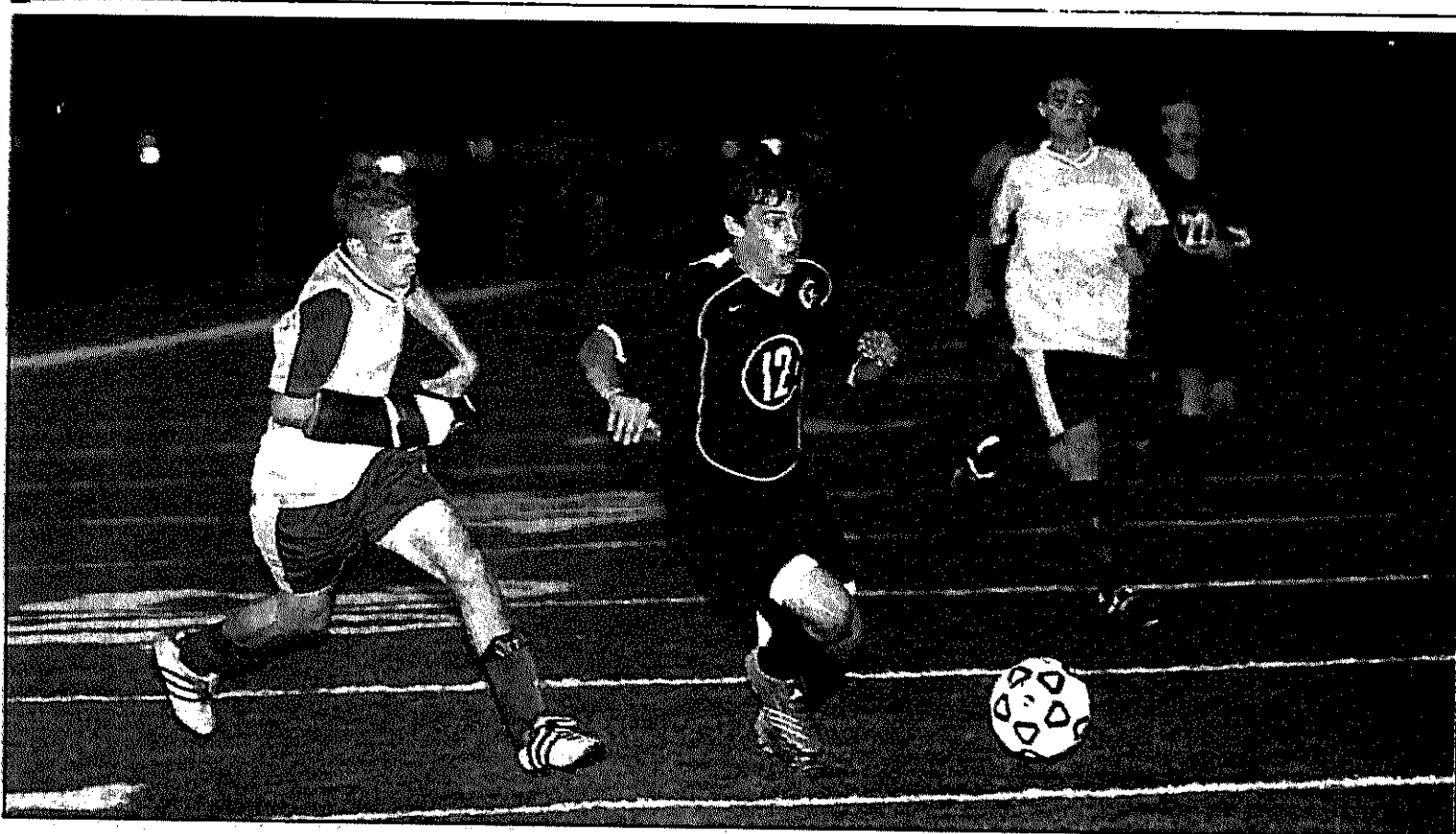
al mark of 2-3. Catholic Central is seeded fifth with a record of 1-3-1 in divisional play. Beaver Local, the other team in Division I, did not qualify for the tournament finishing with an 0-5 record in divisional play.

Big Red qualified for the tournament by winning the Division II title with a perfect 5-0 record. Cambridge was second in the division with a record of 3-2, but will not be competing in the tournament meaning St. Clairsville with a record of 2-2-1 will be the seventh seed. Weir with a record of 2-3, East Liverpool with a record of 2-3 and Edison with a record of 0-4-1 failed to qualify for the tournament.

In Division III, John Marshall won the title with a record of 3-2, and the Monarchs will be the eighth seed. Tyler Consolidated (3-2), Oak Glen (2-2-1), Wheeling Central (2-2-1), Indian Creek (2-3) and Magnolia (2-3) all failed to qualify for the tournament.

Linsly will open play against John Marshall at 5:30 Monday with the Catholic Central vs. Zanesville game to follow at about 7:30 p.m. Brooke will face off against St. Clairsville at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday and Wheeling Park will take on Big Red at about 7:30 p.m. The upper bracket semifinal will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday while the lower bracket semifinal will be played at 4 p.m. The finals will be played at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 1. at Wheeling Island Stadium.

This year's tournament is dedicated to former Weir girls coach Jim Truax who passed away this summer.



# OVAC Cup concludes

• Park girls, Linsly boys take crowns

By JOSH STROPE  
For The Times Lader

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T-L Photos/JOEL JOSEPH  
**TOP:** Linsly's Zack Truak operates toward a goal during Monday's OVAC Soccer Cup final. Linsly prevailed by a 2-0 count.  
**ABOVE:** Linsly senior Isaam Sawtarie looks for room on the sideline during Monday's OVAC Soccer Cup final at Wheeling Island Stadium.

See, OVAC, Page B4

Continued from Page B1

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# Tournament to Honor Truax

OVAC Cup begins Monday with boys' action at Weir

By JOSH STROPE  
Staff Writer

This year's OVAC Cup Soccer Tournament will have a different feel to it.

The 2005 version will be dedicated in the memory of former Weir High girls' soccer coach Jim Truax, who passed away this summer.

"Jim was a true friend of the sport, its' players, and myself in particular," new OVAC soccer director Chuck Robinson said. "Jim was a model of the true coach. He cared more about his players and the sport than he did about winning."

He is truly missed and we are proud to dedicate this year's tournament to him."

This year, the tournament will be held at Weir High School and Brooke High School.

The boys' tournament will be held in Weirton and begins Monday with first round matchups.

Linsly earned the top seed by virtue of a 5-0 record in conference play, winning their seventh OVAC division title, and first under new coach Randy Shah. The Cadets look to seek some revenge for last season's ouster in the championship game to Brooke, a 2-0 defeat which ended a four-year



Jim Truax

reign as OVAC Cup Champions. The Bruins, the second seed, open up their title defense against St. Clairsville on Wednesday.

The girls' tournament starts Tuesday at Brooke, with top seed John Marshall facing Oak Glen. It is the first OVAC Division I title for Cindy Lawther's Monarchs, who clinched with a win over defending champion Weir earlier this week. Wheeling Park, the third seed, has won the OVAC Cup the past eight years and this year seeks to win its first under new coach Rick Thomas. The Patriots

face off against sixth-seed Linsly Thursday.

The semifinals will be held Saturday at the respective schools.

The champions of the 15th annual OVAC Cup Championships will be crowned Monday, Oct. 3 at Wheeling Island Stadium.

**BOYS**

@ Weir High School  
Monday, Sept. 26

(1) Linsly vs (8) John Marshall, 5:30 p.m.  
(4) Zanesville vs (5) Steubenville Central, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 28

(2) Brooke vs (7) St. Clairsville, 5:30 p.m.  
(3) Wheeling Park vs (6) Steubenville, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 1

Linsly/John Marshall winner vs Zanesville/Steubenville Central winner, 2 p.m.  
Brooke/St. Clairsville winner vs Wheeling Park/Steubenville winner, 4 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 3

@ Wheeling Island Stadium  
OVAC Championship game, 7:30 p.m.

**GIRLS**

@ Brooke High School  
Tuesday, Sept. 27

(1) John Marshall vs (8) Oak Glen, 5:30 p.m.  
(4) Brooke vs (5) Wheeling Central, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 29

(2) Weir vs (7) Edison, 5:30 p.m.  
(3) Wheeling Park vs (7) Linsly, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 1

John Marshall/Oak Glen winner vs Brooke/Wheeling Central winner, 10 a.m.

Weir/Edison winner vs Wheeling Park/Linsly winner, noon.

Monday, Oct. 3

@ Wheeling Island Stadium  
OVAC Championship game, 5:30 p.m.



# Weir girls coach Jim Truax left his mark on many lives

By AARON PETCHAL  
Sports writer

**WEIRTON** — Some people leave a lasting impression on all of those they meet. Former Weir girls coach Jim Truax was one of those people.

This year, the 15th annual boys and girls Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Cup Soccer Tournaments will be dedicated to the memory of Truax, who passed away this summer.



Truax

"Jim was a true friend of the sport, its players and myself in particular," said OVAC Soccer Director Chuck Robinson. "Jim was a model of the true coach. He cared more about his players

and the sport than he did about winning. He can be used as a standard against which all coaches can measure themselves. He is truly missed and we are proud to dedicate this year's tournament to him."

Weir coach Bill Giebell said the dedication means a lot to many people.

"That means a lot," he said. "It says a lot about Jim. Jim was not only a good coach, but he was a fantastic guy. He had a big heart. He worked well with the girls. I am sure it means an awful lot to the girls, to Jim's family and it means an awful lot to me and probably the school too."

This season, the Red Riders girls soccer team placed second in Division I and will be the second seed in the tournament. Weir opens up play in the tournament at 5:30 p.m. Thursday against Edison.

Giebell said his team doesn't feel any added pressure entering the tournament dedicated to its former coach.

"Pressure? No, I don't think so," he said. "I don't think it is going to put pressure on them. They have played with pressure before. I don't think there is going to be any pressure on them. They are going to play their game whether they are having a good day or a bad day. They are going to play as hard as they can play."

The girls tournament will be held at Brooke, and the boys tournament will be at Weir. The boys and girls finals will once again be held at Wheeling Island Stadium Oct. 1.

Giebell said the loss of his close friend as been tough on him and on his team.

"Tough on them? It has been tough on all of us," he

said. "Like I said before, I had known Jimmy since we were 5 or 6 years old. That is a long time. I worked with him.

Tough on them? It was tougher on the ones that knew him well, and it took a while to get over the hump. The sadness

was there, but they pulled together and sort of leaned on each other. They are playing soccer."

ORTS

THE INTELLIGENCER — Wheeling, W.Va. — Monday, August 8, 2005

## Robinson

(Continued from Page 13)

Who was he going to find that loved soccer as much as Adams? Who was going to help soccer grow?

"The first name brought up to me was Chuck Robinson," Rataiczak said. "Here is a former official, a former coach, and is someone that is blessed a good heart and dedication to the game of soccer."

"When Chuck said he wanted the job, it wasn't a hard decision to make."

Robinson started the Northern Panhandle Youth Soccer Association (NPYSA) 20 years ago, and along with Weir coach Joe Pepe, created a successful organization that brought soccer to young kids. With soccer becoming available, kids in Hancock County were exposed to a new sport.

With the addition of the league, Weir High and Weirton Madonna added soccer teams. Pepe took control of Weir, while Robinson took the reigns at Madonna.

Through the years, Robinson

dedicated his success to the people who helped him. One of the men Robinson admired most was Jimmy Truax.

Truax was a coach for many years with the NPYSA, before moving on to coach the girls soccer team at Weir. Truax passed away this past week at the age of 57 to cancer.

Robinson's first act as OVAC soccer director was to dedicate this year's OVAC Cup Tournament to the memory of Truax.

"Jimmy was a friend to everyone involved with soccer, and to see how much dedication and passion he brought to the game of soccer was unmatched," Robinson said.

"The coaches, the officials, the players are really going to miss him. I miss him already."

While a vote by the coaches is needed for them become official, some of the proposed changes for the OVAC are four separate divisions all determined by enrollment — like the league handles all other sports.

Robinson would also like to see more regular season games within the OVAC, and he would like to guarantee all teams playing two games in the OVAC Cup.

Teams can schedule home-and-home games, but a third matchup between two teams will not count.

"You know, everyone hates change, but what Chuck is doing is going to be good for the game," Rataiczak said. "Being around for so long, he knows the sport from many different angles and I support any ideas he has to improve the sport."

Robinson sees the soccer community as family, as coaches, officials, and players all know each other and respect each other.

It's safe to say OVAC soccer is in good hands.

"I'm glad they've welcomed me back to the ranks, the sky is the limit for OVAC soccer and that's what we all want the kids to realize," Robinson said.

## OVAC Soccer Has New Director

Charles Robinson takes over for Adams

By JOSH STROPE  
Staff Writer

For 23 years, Charles Robinson has been a part of the sport of soccer. After stepping down as the boys soccer coach at Weirton Madonna in 2003, he knew it wouldn't be the end.

He wasn't gone for long. Robinson was recently named the

second Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Soccer Director, replacing Jay Adams, who relinquished his duties after serving as director since 1991.

"My wife says it's because I can't say no," Robinson joked. "In all seriousness, I missed being around and this way I can be a part of soccer and help the kids any way I can."

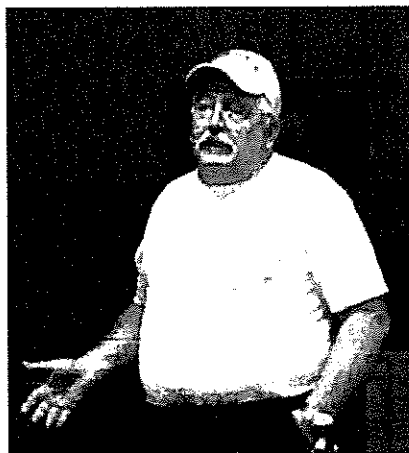
As Robinson stood in front of the OVAC boys and girls coaches



Sunday at the league's annual coaches meeting held at the McDonough Center on the campus of Wheeling Jesuit University, he stressed he wasn't Adams, but plans on keeping the progress made in the past 14 years.

When Adams stepped down, OVAC Executive Secretary Tom Rataiczak wasn't sure what direction to turn.

Please See ROBINSON, Page 18



Charles Robinson speaks to OVAC soccer coaches at a meeting Sunday at Wheeling Jesuit.

Photo by Josh Strobe

# Sawtarie Records Hat Trick

## Linsly to face defending champ Brooke for boys' crown

By JOSH STROPE  
Staff Writer

Having a player like Issam Sawtarie on your team can make Linsly coach Randy Shah's first year much easier.

Sawtarie scored three goals and led the Cadets to a 4-1 victory over Zanesville in the semifinals of the OVAC Cup Tournament Saturday at Weir High School.

The Cadets will try to regain the OVAC Cup title Monday against defending champ Brooke.

The Bruins beat the Wheeling Park in a penalty kick shootout later in the day.

"He is a very important part of this team and is an emotional leader for us," Shah said.

Sawtarie scored early in the game after being taken down in the penalty box. He was awarded a penalty kick and finished the play by putting the ball in the corner past Zanesville keeper Adam Grosshandler.

While coaches must look out when Sawtarie has the ball, he showed he can be a deadly passer as well.

Sawtarie executed a perfect through-ball behind the Blue Devil defenders and a streaking Josh Chapman took the ball the rest of the way, scoring the game's second goal.

Sawtarie almost had goal No. 2, but his shot clanked off the goalpost. He made sure he got it on his next shot, putting a shot high in the corner out of Grosshandler's reach to give the Cadets (11-3) a three-goal lead heading into halftime.

"We didn't play 100 percent today, and that penalty kick took away any momentum we had," Zanesville coach Ryan Barks said.

Zanesville tried to climb back in, scoring just over a minute into the second half on a Hank Ring's chip shot over Linsly goalie Thomas Reihner.

Midway through the second half, Shah had a big decision to face.

A collision in the box was called against Sawtarie, and the forward bounced the ball in frustration. The referee



awarded Sawtarie a yellow card. Another card and Sawtarie would be ejected and forced to miss the championship game.

"This kid is a talent and knows what to do and what not to do," Shah said. "He acted out of emotion and that's something we can live with."

"I knew he would keep cool and not commit a hard foul."

Shah was right, and sent Sawtarie back in the game. The talented forward proved his coach right by scoring his final goal. Sawtarie, back facing the net, turned a fired a shot towards the goal. The ball bounced off the goalpost and into the goal.

"It takes a lot of luck to make that kind of shot," Barks said. "It also takes a lot of talent, and Sawtarie is one of the most talented players in the OVAC."

"He's a great player, and Linsly is a great team. We just wish we could have showed them the real Zanesville out here tonight."

Linsly was just too much for Zanesville, who had to drive two hours to Weirton for the game. The Blue Devils also came of a double overtime thriller against Steubenville Central on Monday.

Even when the Cadets gave up the goal in the second half, Shah had total faith in his team.

"They caught us off guard and after that, we started settling down and played our game," he said. "They showed a lot today and we are excited about the opportunity to play on Monday."

**Brooke 2, Wheeling Park 2, 3-2 SO**  
Brooke took a 2-0 lead, but

Wheeling Park rallied to tie it, only to fall in a penalty kick shootout and the Bruins advance to meet Linsly in the OVAC Cup finals.

Brooke got goals from Mike Oliver and Josh Whitt to start the scoring, but two second half goals by Park's Ryan Horan tied the game.

In the shootout, the Bruins got goals from John Allen Zumpetta, Justin Wilkinson, and Whitt, while Horan and Vinny Crumrine scored for the Patriots. Park's Tim Knight's penalty shot hit the crossbar to end the game.

### REGULAR SEASON

**East Liverpool 4, John Marshall 2**

At East Liverpool, Jimmy Wood scored two goals and collected an assist to lead the Potters past the Monarchs.

Zach Kinsey and Alex Payne recorded the other goals for East Liverpool.

Eric Seachrist and Nathan Beck scored for John Marshall (7-5), while Jared Patrick added an assist. Patrick Meyer made five saves in goal.

**Oak Glen 3, Monroe Central 1**

At Woodsfield, Casey McDougal, Ryan Asbury and Colin McGeehan each scored goals as the Golden Bears downed the Seminoles.

Asbury added an assist for Oak Glen (10-4-2). Ron Vojtas had 15 saves in goal.

Nick Jorris scored the lone goal for Monroe Central (4-8-2). Brad Elby made 12 stops in net.

### OVAC CUP

**Linsly 4, Zanesville 1**

L - Goals: Sawtarie 3, Chapman; Assists: Sawtarie; Goalkeeper: Reihner (2 saves) Z - Goals: Ring; Goalkeeper: Grosshandler (7 saves).

**Brooke 2**

**Wheeling Park 2, 3-2 SO**

B - Goals: Mike Oliver, Josh Whitt; Assists: Oliver, Breen; Goalkeeper: Whitehead (10 saves) Ford (2 saves), W - Goals: Ryan Horan 2; Goalkeeper: Voegelin (8 saves).

### REGULAR SEASON

**East Liverpool 4, John Marshall 2**

JM - Goals: Seachrist, Beck. Assists: Patrick; Goalkeeper: Meyer (5 saves). EL - Goals: Kinsey, Wood 2, Payne. Assists: Wood. Goalkeeper: Montiero (6 saves).

**Oak Glen 3, Monroe Central 1**

OG - Goals: McDougal, Asbury, McGeehan. Assists: Asbury. Goalkeeper: ojtas (15 saves). MC - Goal: Jorris. Assist: Blackstone. Goalkeeper: Eby (12 saves).

AY NEWS-REGISTER - Wheeling, W.Va. - Sunday, October 2, 2005

## GIRLS

Continued from page B3

Weir, whose only previous defeat came over a week to John Marshall, played hard, but it wasn't enough to dethrone Park.

"We played well, we obviously aren't happy about the result, but we will be okay and we're not going to worry about it," Weir coach Bill Giebell.

The Patriots look to win their first OVAC Cup in Thomas's first season.

"There are seniors on John Marshall that really want to beat Wheeling Park and put an end to this, they were upset when we beat them earlier," Thomas said. "Coach Lawther has a lot of talent with the Baker girls and its going to be a dogfight."

**John Marshall 1, Wheeling Central 0**  
Shayna Varner scored the

lone goal of a cross from Mandy Loy and as the Monarchs defeat Wheeling Central to advance to the OVAC Cup Tournament finals.

Monarch goalkeeper Nikki O'Brian preserved the shutout with 11 saves.

The Maroon Knights upset Brooke Tuesday, but weren't able to score despite a valiant effort.

Goalie Kristen DeSantia has 10 saves in the loss.

### OVAC CUP

**Wheeling Park 1, Weir 0**

WP - Goals: Bizanovich; Assists: Freeman; Goalkeeper: Forzano (3 saves). W - Goalkeeper: Dalrymple (6 saves).

**John Marshall 1, Wheeling Central 0**  
J - Goals: Varner; Assists: Loy; Goalkeeper: O'Brian (11 saves). W - Goalkeeper: DeSantia (10 saves).

### REGULAR SEASON

**Oak Glen 4, Cambridge 1**

OG - Goals: Mitchel, Benavides, Radeski, Banner. Assists: Schaefer, Radeski. Goalkeeper: Cain (18 saves). C - Goalkeeper: Duff.

## Wheeling Park Girls Blank Weir

By JOSH STROPE  
Staff Writer

The Weir girls' soccer team has established itself as one of the elite teams in the OVAC over the past few years.

There's just one problem - Wheeling Park isn't ready to surrender the OVAC title just yet.

The Patriots scored an early goal, and it was all they would need as Wheeling Park defeated the Red Riders, 1-0, in the semifinals of the OVAC Cup Saturday at Brooke High School.

Wheeling Park has won the previous eight OVAC Cup Tournaments and will be looking for their ninth in a row and 10th overall when they face top-seed John Marshall Monday for the championship. The match begins at 5:30 p.m. at Wheeling Island Stadium.

The Monarchs defeated Wheeling Central, 1-0, earlier in the day.

"I hope they know what this means, what their experience means," Wheeling Park coach Rick Thomas said.

"(John Marshall coach) Cindy Lawther will have her team ready to play and they expect to win this game."

The Patriots (8-2-4) defeated John Marshall, 2-0, earlier in the season.

Park's Sarah Bizanovich scored the game's

only goal just over five minutes in. The sophomore defender hit a ball with her chest off a Emily Freeman corner kick and the ball bounced into the Weir net past goalkeeper Paige Dalrymple.

The Patriots remained on the attack throughout the game, limiting the scoring chances for the Red Riders.

The best scoring chance for the Red Riders came when Melissa Henry and Carly Gregson had a two-on-one against Park goalie Jenna Forzano.

Forzano came out to the top of the penalty box to knock away the Gregson shot.

Henry also came close after beating a defender, but missed the net wide.

From there, the Patriots put the clamps down, allowing only one shot in the second half. Wheeling Park played the majority of the game in Weir territory, outshooting the Red Riders, 8-3.

Park came close to adding a goal in the second half when Bizanovich headed the ball off the crossbar.

"We've really been working on revamping our offense the past few weeks by sending our midfielders more on the attack," Thomas said.

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