

Linsly boys claim OVAC Soccer Cup

By JOSH STROPE
For The Times Leader

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Top-seeded Linsly won its sixth OVAC Cup in eight seasons by defeating final newcomer Steubenville, 3-0, on Monday in the boys' OVAC Cup Final at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Linsly's offense was held in check for most of the game by a Steubenville defense that had surrendered two goals in its first 11 games. It also marked the first loss of the season for Big Red.

"This is our state championship," Linsly coach Randy Shah said.

"These are a great group of guys and they deserved to win."

"This is what we play for."

Every coach in the valley knows about Linsly's Nader Sawtarie and the amazing things he can do on a soccer field.

Steubenville did its best to keep him off the scoreboard, allowing him just three shots.

But Linsly boasts more than just the talented senior.

Kevin Riley put Linsly on the scoreboard in the 29th minute as he deflected an indirect kick from Evan Sincavich past a diving Big Red goalie David Almeida.

"I think that Nader attracted a lot of the attention so it freed me up a lot and Evan was great on the set pieces," Riley said. "It was a team effort, and not just one person scoring."

The 1-0 lead held until the 67th minute when Senai Tesfagiorgis picked up a loose ball in the penalty box and beat Almeida.

Riley added his second goal off another indirect kick from Sincavich in the 74th minute to seal the victory.

"It's our senior year and it's all about winning that OVAC Cup," Riley said. "That's what we came to do and it's awesome that we did it. We couldn't ask for a better season."

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Wheeling Park girls win 11th straight OVAC

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It won't be this class.

The Patriots survived a few early scares and scored four times in the second half on their way to an 11th consecutive OVAC Cup championship with a 4-0 victory against Linsly on Monday at Wheeling Island Stadium.

"We put so much pressure on ourselves," Hladek said. "I think in the first half, Linsly wanted it more. They were real aggressive and tried early on to take us out of the game."

"I think we were just a little bit deeper and as the game wore on, it allowed us to do more."

A scoreless first half wasn't lacking excitement.

Linsly had opportunities to put Wheeling Park in an early hole, but golden chances went by the wayside.

First, Katie Jochum came up with a loose ball and had only Wheeling Park goalie Jillian Blalock standing between her and a 1-0 lead.

Jochum's shot sailed over the net.

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● Boys

Continued from Page B1

ever I can't. This is a great team and I'm glad to be a part of it." Steubenville had some opportunities in the first half on Linsly goalie Erik Schmalz, but the senior keeper stepped up to the task and knocked them away.

Big Red dominated the first 15 minutes, coming out and playing with a lot of fire.

Once the second half came around, Steubenville coach Greg Bowers had to change things around to generate more offense in an attempt to tie the game.

"It was a little disappointing, but this was a great overall experience for the kids," Bowers said.

"The main thing is that they might not look at it (today) as a good experience, but it will be a memory to take with them as the weeks go by and as next year goes by."

"We had some chances early and the first 15 minutes we dictated the pace. The first goal is very important and they were able to get that and take the momentum away from us."

"Linsly is well-coached, a good team and they just played their game. They play every game that way and they took it to us."

Steubenville was held to three shots in the second half, none that were any real threat to Schmalz.

"We stepped up and played hard," Sincavich said. "We shut them down and didn't give them many chances. We got the job done."

The title is the ninth OVAC Cup for the Cadets.

● Girls

Continued from Page B1

Jochum had a chance to redeem herself in the 25th minute as a perfect pass from Chelsea Hennen beat two defenders and Jochum was one-on-one with Blalock.

Blalock came out to challenge the shot, but Jochum slipped the ball past her, only to have it hit the post and bounce out of play.

Later, Hennen had a chance at an empty net, but Wheeling Park's Caitlin Birge cleared the threat.

Like Linsly, Wheeling Park had opportunities to score, but each time came up short by diving saves from Linsly netminder Kaitlyn Pytlak.

"Kaitlyn was a whole different player from the last time we played Park," Linsly coach Jill Regan said. "She's been practicing real hard and working on coming out. She decided that was her area (Monday night) and she was taking control of it."

"It was the best game I've ever seen her play."

But Pytlak couldn't keep the Cadets in the game the whole time as Wheeling Park eventually broke through.

OVAC Soccer Cup Championships



Photo by Mike Hughes

Linsly's Anna Simmons, left, defends as Wheeling Park's Mallory Mueller (11) pushes the ball upfield during action of their girls' OVAC Soccer Cup Championship game Monday at Wheeling Island Stadium.

These Go to Eleven

Four players score as Park girls extend OVAC Cup streak

By JOSH STROPE
Staff Writer

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In the 45th minute, the Patriots got on the scoreboard as Lauren Thomas took a pass from Ali Railing and beat Pytlak nearside for the 1-0 lead.

"Lauren is a special player and I think as a team, we were asking too much from her and she was asking too much of herself," Hladek said.

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Riley Sparks Linsly

Cadets claim sixth crown in eight seasons

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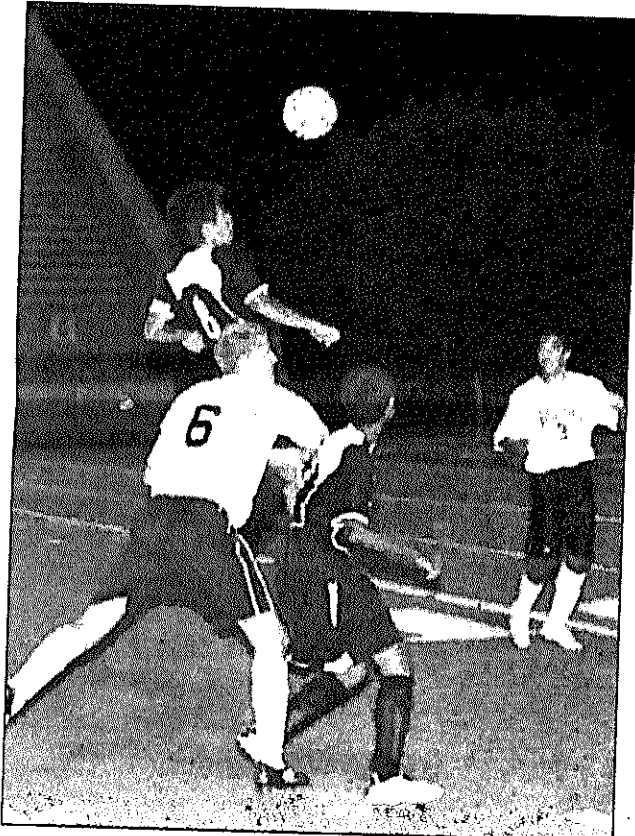


Photo by Mike Hughes

Linsly's Nader Sawtarie heads the ball in front of Steubenville's Brennan Stover (6) and teammate Senai Tesfagiorgis, front, during their game Monday at Wheeling Island Stadium. Linsly won, 3-0.

Linsly

(Continued from Page 15)

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"We stepped up and played hard," Sincavich said. "We shut them down and didn't give them many chances. We got the job done."

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OVAC Cup Final
(at Wheeling Island Stadium)
Linsly 3, Steubenville 0
L — Goals: Riley 2, S. Tesfagiorgis;
Assists: Sincavich 2; Goalkeeper:
Schmalz (5 saves); S — Goalkeeper:
Almeida (6 saves).

Park

(Continued from Page 15)

"Everybody started to step it up and when everybody is playing their best, Lauren can go out and just play.

"That's when she does her best and it's because everybody else is taking the tension away. Natalie Smith, Ali Railing, and Mallory Mueller are threats themselves, it allows Lauren to see one defender and that's when she takes over."

Six minutes later, Elizabeth Kosowski scored on a header off a corner kick by Natalie Smith.

Smith scored in the 70th minute and Jaclyn Fullerton added the final goal in the 72nd minute to complete the scoring.

"They were angry and they didn't think they should have went to the half at 0-0," Hladek said. "They wanted to prove that this was still their title. Once we got a goal or two, I think that's when Linsly's bubble kinda popped and they ran out of gas.

"Congrats to Jill, (assistant coaches) Erica (Hall), and Darryl (Crews) for doing what they did with those girls and to their goalie who did a phenomenal job and kept them in the game as long she did."

Added Regan: "The girls had an excellent first half. They played very hard and had Park rattled. We are a small team

and we don't have the luxury that Park has with the depth and we ran out of steam.

"We really needed to score at the beginning of the game when we were fresh."

Wheeling Park turns its attention to winning a potential state championship. The Patriots have two tough games with Jefferson and Parkersburg South before starting the sectional playoffs in two weeks.

"It's no longer the OVAC now, with a tough game against Jefferson on Saturday. We want it, and now we have to go get it," Hladek said.

Game Notes

Five yellow cards were issued in the game (Wheeling Park — 4, Linsly — 1). ... Linsly boys' swimming has the record for most consecutive championships with 36 from 1948-83. Shadyside boys' track is second with 13 straight, and the Patriots girls' soccer team comes in third in a tie with Wheeling Park and Wheeling Central cheerleading. ... In the 11-year span, Hladek is the Patriots' sixth coach to win an OVAC Cup and just the third to win more than one.

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(at Wheeling Island Stadium)
Wheeling Park 4, Linsly 0
W — Goals: Thomas, Kosowski,
Smith, Fullerton; Assists: Railing 2,
Bizanovich, Smith; Goalkeeper: Blalock (2
saves); L — Goalkeeper: Pytlak (8 saves).