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The Intelligent.
SPORTS

MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 25, 2017
 COMICS20
 CLASSIFIED21-24

OVAC Soccer Tourney Kicks Off Today

One of my favorite events of the prep sports season begins today at venues across the Ohio Valley when the OVAC Soccer Championships get underway.
 I wrote a column many years ago stating that it was the hidden gem of the OVAC and I still feel that holds true today.

One of the best decisions the OVAC has made was doing away with the one

all-class tournament and splitting it up into three classes.

Today, the boys portion of the tournament starts when the No. 1 seeds play host to the No. 4 seeds. The other semifinals will be Wednesday. The championships will be held Saturday at Red Devil Stadium in St. Clairsville.

The girls' quest for a conference title will be Tuesday and Thursday and culminate Saturday at Wheeling Island

Stadium.
 Every week we put our football selections in the paper (which I am in sole possession of first place, just for the record). So why not give my predictions on the soccer tournament?

BOYS

CLASS 5A

University of Morgantown
 Morgantown is the defending champion, defeating University last season

in the title game. University rebounded and was the state runner-up in West Virginia.

The Hawks have yet to capture an on-field OVAC championship, but I think this will be their year. University opens tonight against Wheeling Park, with the two already having played and the Hawks owning a 2-0 victory.

See STROPE, Page 14



JOSH STROPE
 Sports Editor

The experience is there and this will be the year they get the monkey off their back.
CLASS 4A
Stebenville d. St. Clairsville

Speaking of getting the monkey off their back, no team as Stebenville has had.
 For years it was state-ranked Wheeling Park teams that got in their way. Last season, Weir knocked off Big Red. Greg Bowers is one of the top soccer coaches in the valley and his teams are often solid on defense. This season, they have plenty of offense behind Ryan DeLelles, Adam DiCarlo and more.
 The OVAC Cup will finally find a home in the Stebenville High School trophy case.
CLASS 1A/3A
Linsy d. Stebenville Catholic

This tournament is one that has been dominated by Stebenville Catholic and Linsy.
 The Crusaders have won it the past two seasons, including a 7-1 pasting of the Cadets in last season's final. Like University, I think Linsy will earn a measure of revenge.
 Stebenville Catholic is loaded offensively and Linsy is young. But I see the Cadets' Manuel Sutila scoring a pair of big goals to earn a hard-fought victory and Linsy's first title in three seasons.
GIRLS
CLASS 5A
Wheeling Park d. University

There are probably not two more evenly matched teams in the entire OVAC - if not West Virginia - than Wheeling Park and University.
 Last season, the teams tied in the regular season. They met in the semifinals of the OVAC Tournament and University advanced on penalty kicks. The Hawks were victorious again in the regional final on a controversial goal.
 They met this season and tied, 2-2.
 See what I mean.
 Wheeling Park enters as the No. 3 seed and will open on the road Thursday at Buckeye 8 champion Beaver Local. The Patriots defeated the Beavers last Thursday, 4-1. I expect a similar result to set up the match we all want to see again.

CLASS 4A
St. Clairsville d. Oak Glen
 Oak Glen has been one of the big surprises this season and getting to the OVAC championship game will be a huge accomplishment.
 That being said, the Golden Bears will face the unenviable task of trying to slow down the Red Devils' Alyssa Otto, who has 4-5 goals on the season. And the rest of her teammates are pretty good, too.
 The Red Devils lost their first game of the season Saturday to Beaver Local in the Buckeye 8 title game. Something tells me that will just fuel them this week and they will be hard to stop.

CLASS 1A/3A
Wheeling Central d. Linsy
 This was the hardest one for me to predict and, quite honestly, I am still not sure.
 The two teams split during the regular season with the home team winning each game. That is why I am going with Wheeling Central.
 While I know the game will be played a neutral field, that field will be on turf. Wheeling Central is fast. After watching the speed Kenadee Wayt showed Saturday against Crestview, she is a going to be a challenge in itself. Add in probably one of the smartest players in the area in Claire Dieffenbaugh and I am picking the Maroon Knights to raise the OVAC championship trophy for the first time in the playoff era.
 Josh Strope can be reached at jstrope@theintelligencer.net

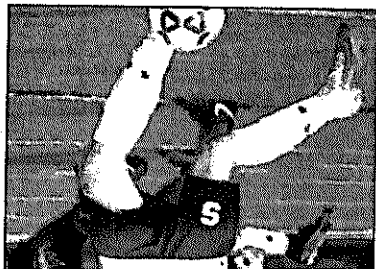


Photo by Joe Catullo
Staubenville's Evan Naylor controls the ball during a game against Harrison Central.

Big Red Defeats Huskies

By ANDREW GRIMM
For The Intelligencer

STUBENVILLE
Staubenville looked like the OVAC Class 4A No. 1 seed Monday night at Harding Stadium, dominating from start to finish to take care of fourth-seeded Harrison Central by a four-goal performance from senior striker Adam DiCarlo.

"We talked about executing, coming out playing our game and possessing the ball," Big Red coach Greg Bowers said. "They did everything we could have asked them to do. They stayed back and played more defensive on us. We tried to keep possession of the ball, which means that they can't score. We did a nice job of that. Hats off to the team; this was our fourth game in about six days, and they put together a good performance."

DiCarlo opened up the scoring with a shot from in close on the right side of the goal in the ninth minute. Big Red (8-1-1) had dominated possession up to that point. After a couple of near misses, DiCarlo struck again in the 22nd minute, this time with a long distance shot to make it a 2-0 game. Ryan DeLelles, who was fresh off of a five-goal performance last week, scored on a penalty kick in the 23rd minute to give Big Red a 3-0 lead, which was also the half-time score. DeLelles also picked up three assists.

DiCarlo connected for the hat trick in the 41st minute to carry the Staubenville domination over to the second half, taking a pass from senior midfielder Evan Naylor and maneuvering his way around Harrison Central (5-6) defenders to create space and fire a shot into the low right corner of the net. DiCarlo connected again in the 46th minute on a header from in close on a nice set up from sophomore midfielder Noah Reinacher to make it a 5-0 advantage.

BIG RED

(Continued from Page 11)

"It feels good," DiCarlo said. "I haven't been able to shoot recently, and I guess tonight was just my night. My teammates kept giving me the ball and setting me up which let me score. It's good to have this performance, especially in the first round of the tournament. We had a tough game on Saturday, and we're just keeping the wins rolling."

Senior defender Joseph Venditti connected in the 61st minute to make it 6-0 with an assist from sophomore striker Dalan Livingston. Freshman striker Andrew Neely capped the scoring with a shot that just barely snuck by Huskies freshman goalkeeper

Jojo Downs, who was thrust into action with regular starter junior Job Positano out with an injury. Downs finished with 15 saves.

"He's great at making reaction saves," Huskies coach Derek Gramling said. "When he gets taller he'll be better. He's got a very bright future for us. We let them have too much time, and when you give a team like Staubenville time to look up, find a pass or take a shot, bad things are going to happen. Staubenville is tough enough. When you're missing three starters it just makes it even harder. We got some experience for the younger guys there at the end so there was some positive."

In goal for Big Red, junior Jacob Clevinger made three saves for the shutout.

"We discussed when we watched film last night that we weren't happy giving up seven goals in our last two games," Bowers said. "It was a big point of focus to keep our defense in shape and get another shutout."

Big Red advances to the OVAC Class 4A final on Saturday, facing the St. Clairsville-East Liverpool winner. That game is on Wednesday in East Liverpool.

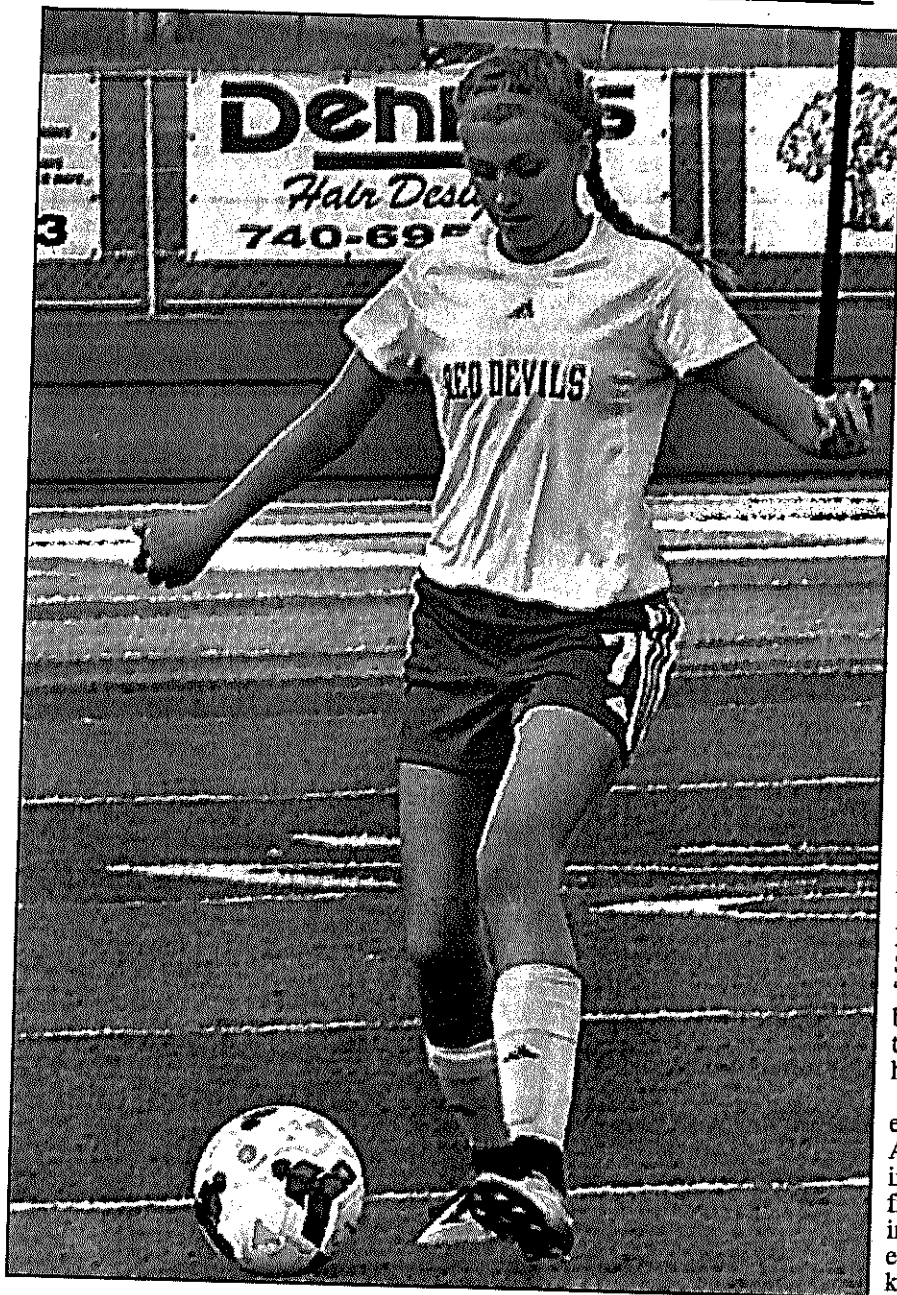
Class 1A/3A
Staubenville Catholic 5
Caldwell 0
STEUBENVILLE — Ethan

Moore supplied two goals as Staubenville Catholic defeated Caldwell and advanced to the 1A/3A OVAC title game. Also scoring for the Crusaders were Joe Kuebler, Dante Ascii and Matthew Duff. Joe Zimmo had two assists while Travis Shorre tallied two saves.

Regular Season
John Marshall 8
Magnolia 6

GLEN DALE — Justin Mencer recorded a hat trick to lead the Monarchs and Hayden Thomas added a pair of goals in the win. Daniel Yoho, Cooper Curto and Wesley Skridge added a goal apiece and Jacob Varner collected 15 saves.

OVAC CUP



ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Ariel Ott (7) controls the ball during Tuesday night's OVAC Cup Class 4A semifinal against Edison at Red Devil Stadium.

T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

Red Devils blank 'Cats

• St.C. advances to 4A final

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — Playing for The Cup. No, not Lord Stanley's. The OVAC soccer version.

Top-seeded St. Clairsville (9-1-1) took out some frustrations Tuesday night in coasting past No. 4 Edison in an OVAC Cup Class 4A semifinal contest on the artificial surface inside Red Devil Stadium by a 7-0 count. It marked the second time this season it has blanked the Wildcats, winning 8-0 earlier.

With the victory, which came on the heels of a 3-2 setback at Beaver Local last Saturday in the Buckeye 8 title tilt, the Red Devils advance to the championship game Saturday at 10 a.m. at Wheeling Island Stadium. They will meet the winner of Thursday's other semifinal between No. 2 Oak Glen and third-seeded Steubenville which will be played on the Golden Bears turf in New Manchester.

"We're excited to be playing for The Cup. I think the girls are ready for it (the game)," St. Clairsville head coach Wes Stoner said. "It doesn't matter who we play. They are both quality teams. I'm planning on scouting the game Thursday and see what each team has."

St. Clairsville didn't waste any time in erasing memories of Saturday's loss as Alyssa Otto netted the first of her four goals in the third minute. Taking a nifty throw-in from freshman Macy Malin, the high-scoring junior dribbled between a pair of defenders before blasting the ball past Edison goalkeeper Abby Booth.

"An early goal always helps, no matter what," Stoner noted. "We had a little bit of a

See, DEVILS, Page B2

• Devils

Continued from Page B1

lull after that, which I didn't like. We let down a little after scoring that quick one, but it was still a good confidence boost. We're moving the ball well, but not good enough. We're always trying to improve though."

Edison mounted a serious scoring threat in the 14th minute, but a shot from a scrum of players sailed just right of the net.

Three minutes later, Otto made it 2-0 with a left-footed laser that Booth had no chance on. Taking a pass from Mikayla Hendershot, Otto sped around a couple of defenders as she crossed the box from right to left before letting loose a cannon of a shot inside the far post.

Malin got into the scoring act when she re-directed a rebound past Booth in the 33rd minute. Abby Fifield appeared to have scored moments before, but play continued and Malin pounced on the rebound for a 3-0 reading. Fifield got the assist.

Malin's left-footed shot from 12 yards out on the right wing made it 4-0 in the 44th minute. Jolie Nardo was credited with the assist.

Otto displayed her powerful left leg on the next two net-finders. In the 47th minute, she sent a bomb from 35 yards out on the left wing that sailed over top of Booth and tickled the twine. She then dribbled between two defenders before unleashing a rocket that overpowered backup goalie Chessa Cunningham for a 6-0 advantage.

Hendershot concluded the scoring off an assist from Emily Vera.

All the while, freshman goalkeeper Jaeda Nowak was virtually untested the entire night in recording her eighth shutout of the season. She was only called upon to make two saves as her teammates kept the

ball out of danger for the most part.

"I've been pleased with our defense all season," Stoner continued. "We've let up five goals all year, four if you don't count the one we knocked in our own net. But I count that one. Five goals in 11 games. You can't say enough about our defense."

He cited the efforts of Nowak and back-line players Maria Vincenzo, Tori Cannon, Jolie Nardo and Hannah Yates, along with midfielders Emily Vera, Ariel Ott and Abby Fifield.

"I wasn't worried about how we would come out," Stoner admitted. "We practiced yesterday (Monday) and worked them out pretty hard. We ran them a lot. They were tired today from it, but it's only going to make them better down the stretch."

"I don't think we played great. I think we played good enough. But we're going to have to play a lot better than that Saturday for sure if we're going to beat either Steubenville or Oak Glen. They're both good teams," he added.

Otto's 49 goals are the third highest in school history behind assistant coach Jaelyn (Dutton) Yahn, who scored 51 as a junior (2008) and 69 as a senior (2009) en route to the all-time OHSAA record of 192, which still stands. The 49 ranks 12th among single-season marks. Seventy-five is the most.

Hendershot had two assists to go along with her goal, while Malin added an assist to her two tallies.

Edison head coach Jordan Byrley said she was pleased with her team's effort, despite the final outcome.

"We played well. We came in wanting to play better than the first time we played them," she said. "We wanted to do something unexpected and we did improve upon the game from earlier this season."



ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Noah Brown scores the Red Devils' first goal of the game past East Liverpool goalie Mikey Argabrite. Celebrating is Kyle Hendershot. Photo/Patti Schaeffer

Red Devils edge past Potters in shootout

• St. Clairsville to meet Steubenville Saturday in 4A finals

By DAN SANTARELLI
For The Times Leader

EAST LIVERPOOL — In a game that came down to penalty kicks, East Liverpool lost a hard fought battle to St. Clairsville on Wednesday night in an OVAC Cup Class 4A semifinal at Patter-son Field.

"I guess it was fitting. They took some penalty kicks earlier in the game," St. Clairsville coach Gary Watt said. "We had some practice against it."

East Liverpool and St. Clairsville played to a 2-2 draw after regulation and overtime. In the shootout, the Red Devils edged the Potters 3-2.

"We were just unlucky," East Liver- pool coach Zack Kinsey said. "We hit the post a couple times, missed a penalty

"I GUESS it was fitting. They took some penalty kicks earlier in the game. We had some practice against it."

— Gary Watt
St. Clairsville Head Coach

kick and we didn't capitalize on our chances."

The Potters lost earlier in the season to St. Clairsville by a 4-2 count and coming in Kinsey wanted to be more on the attack.

The Potters (8-3-1) opened the scoring when Josh Recktenwald booted in a penalty kick in the 27th minute.

St. Clairsville (5-3-2) replied later in the first half when Zach Orzolek crossed in a ball from the right side and Noah Brown finished in the 35th minute.

With the game tied at the break, Kin- sey switched up how he delivered his halftime speech.

"I changed it up at halftime, going from a motivational speech to an instruc- tional speech," Kinsey said. "Putting players in the right places to stop the out- side-in attack of St. Clairsville."

The second half saw its first scoring action when St. Clairsville's Alex St. Clair tallied in the 54th minute.

Recktenwald had a chance to tie the game in the 65th minute, but booted a penalty kick right off the middle of the cross bar.



Photo/ANDREW GRIMM

STEUBENVILLE'S Noah Reinbacher and Harrison Central's Eric Leech race for possession of the ball during Monday's OVAC Class 4A soccer semifinal at Harding Stadium. Big Red rolled to a 7-0 victory and will now advance to the conference championship game, which will be played Saturday at 10 a.m. in St. Clairsville. Steubenville will take on the winner of Wednesday's match between St. Clairsville and East Liverpool.

Steubenville cruises past Harrison, 7-0

By **ANDREW GRIMM**
For The Times Leader

STEUBENVILLE — Steubenville looked like the OVAC Class 4A No. 1 seed Monday night at Harding Stadium, dominating from start to finish to take care of fourth-seeded Harrison Central 7-0 win in the semifinal match led by a four-goal performance from senior striker Adam DiCarlo.

"We talked about executing, coming out playing our game and possessing the ball," Big Red coach Greg Bowers said. "They did everything we could have asked them to do. They stayed back and played more defensive on us. We tried to keep possession of the ball, which means that they can't score. We did a nice job of that. Hats off to the team; this was our fourth game in about six days, and they put together a good performance."

DiCarlo opened up the scoring with a shot from in close on the right side of the goal in the ninth minute. Big Red (8-1-1) had dominated possession up to that point. After a couple of near misses, DiCarlo struck again in the 22nd minute, this time

with a long distance shot to make it a 2-0 game.

Ryan Delelles, who was fresh off of a five-goal performance last week, scored on a penalty kick in the 23rd minute to give Big Red a 3-0 lead, which was also the halftime score. Delelles also picked up three assists.

DiCarlo connected for the hat trick in the 41st minute to carry the Steubenville domination over to the second half, taking a pass from senior midfielder Evan Naylor and maneuvering his way around Harrison Central (5-6) defenders to create space and fire a shot into the low right corner of the net.

DiCarlo connected again in the 46th minute on a header from in close on a nice set up from sophomore midfielder Noah Reinacher to make it a 5-0 advantage.

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• Red

Continued from Page C1

Recktenwald redeemed himself later, scoring his second goal of the game in the 74th minute off a rebounded save from St. Clairsville goalie Ryan Davenport.

At the end of 80 minutes the game was deadlocked at 2-2.

Neither team could find the back of the net in the two 5-minute overtime periods.

In the penalty shootout, St. Clairsville's St. Clair, Kyle Hendershot and Justin Musser all had successful attempts.

For the Potters, Shawn Johnson and goalie Michael Argabrite had successful attempts but fell because Davenport sent three of the attempts back.

"It's a little nerve-wracking, but I always keep my cool and go for it with my team," Davenport said.

Watt is looking forward to Saturday's OVAC final with Steubenville set to take place at Red Devil Stadium.

"We are going against a real strong team. They handled us pretty well earlier in the season," Watt said. "It's no secret what's coming our way. It's a senior-loaded team with a lot of talent. They move the ball well. We just have to be disruptive and see what happens."

• Steubenville

Continued from Page B1

goalkeeper Jojo Downs, who was thrust into action with regular starter junior Job Positano out with an injury. Downs finished with 15 saves.

"He's great at making reaction saves," Huskies coach Derek Gramling said. "When he gets taller he'll be better. He's got a very bright future for us. We let them have too much time, and when you give a team like Steubenville time to look up, find a pass or take a shot, bad things are going to happen. Steubenville is tough enough. When you're missing three starters it just makes it even harder. We got some experience for the younger guys there at the end so there was some positive."

In goal for Big Red, junior Jacob Clevinger made three saves for the shutout.

"We discussed when we watched film last night that we weren't happy giving up seven goals in our last two games," Bowers said. "It was a big point of focus to keep our defense in shape and get another shutout."

Harrison Central is off until Oct. 3 when it faces St. Clairsville on the road. Big Red advances to the OVAC Class 4A final on Saturday, facing the St. Clairsville-East Liverpool winner. That game is on Wednesday in East Liverpool.

The 4A title game takes place at 10 a.m. at Red Devil Stadium in St. Clairsville. Big Red fell to Weir in the final last year, and the Red Riders defeated St. Clairsville in the semifinal match. Weir moved to Class 5A this season.

"We're going to take (today off), watch some film and get some rest. Then we start preparing for whoever we get next, whether it's St. Clairsville or East Liverpool," Bowers said. "We kind of have a chip on our shoulder and feel like we have a little unfinished business from last year to complete."

LINSLY

(Continued from Page 15)

The second goal came three minutes later when freshman Will Carson delivered a nice pass to the front of the box where junior Mason Obeldobel sent it high into the back of the net to make it 2-0.

Sophomore Federico Navarro got into the scoring column at 25 minutes when he picked up a loose ball nearly 30 yards out and sent a bomb past Agcaoili for a 3-0 margin that held up at the break.

"I told the kids that you can't get behind a good team like that that quickly," Central coach Brian Komorowski said. "It's just entirely too tough to chase that long when you give up three goals in the first 15 minutes.

"But at the same time, I felt like the kids kept their composure and played much better after that."

Carson added his second and third assists on Linsly's final two tallies in the second half. With 25 minutes to play Carson found Suita running in from the side of the net with the ball being buried in the corner to make it 4-0.

With less than three minutes to go, freshman Arman Toyserkani closed the scoring from 25 yards out on another Carson helper.

"Our strategy was to try and get up early and put it to bed if we could," Martin said. "And we did get the early lead, but Central never gave up. Their improvement is like night and day from earlier this season.

"Coach Komorowski does a nice job with them and they gave us an 80-minute battle. But our goal was to get this win and move on to Saturday and we accomplished that."

Keying Linsly's play is the Cadets ability to pass the ball, keep possession and know where and who the ball is going to at all times.

"That is a product of what we do in practice every day," Martin said. "We train hard on possession and passing and these are a bunch of young, talented kids that do a nice job of it. It is always good to see your training paying dividends on the field."

Komorowski was pleased with his team's effort and already pointing ahead

Linsly Rolls Into Finals



Photo by Josh Strobe

Linsly's Arman Toyserkani, left, battles with Wheeling Central's Jerod Buck during an OVAC Soccer Championships semifinal at Holloway Field.

Suita nets two goals as Cadets blank Knights

By TRACY WATSON
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — With pin-point passing and the ability to keep the ball away from the opponent for long stretches of time, one thing teams facing Linsly's boys' soccer team doesn't want to do is fall behind early.

Wednesday afternoon at Holloway Field, Wheeling Central found itself in a three-goal hole 15 minutes into their Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 1A/3A semifinal contest and the Maroon Knights were never able to dig their way out.

Senior Manuel Suita scored the first of his two goals on a penalty kick seven minutes into the contest and the Cadets were never threatened in rolling to a 5-0 victory over their city rivals to advance to the OVAC Cup finals at 2 p.m. Saturday.

Linsly (11-3) will face top-seeded Steubenville Catholic for the title, the fourth consecutive year the two teams will battle it out for the championship. The Crusaders are the two-time defending Class 1A/3A champions, including last season's 7-1 win over the Cadets, with Linsly claiming the title in 2014.

"This is like our state championship," first-year Linsly coach Greg Martin said. "It's the only trophy that we get to play for and the kids are very excited to have another opportunity."

It didn't take the ball-hogging Cadets long to dent the scoreboard, with Suita tripped up while running free in the box and being awarded a penalty kick. The senior captain sent a rocket past Central (8-3-1) junior keeper David Agcaoili and the hosts had a 1-0 advantage.

See LINSLY, Page 16

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"That is a product of what we do in practice every day," Martin said. "We train hard on possession and passing and these are a bunch of young, talented kids that do a nice job of it. It is always good to see your training paying dividends on the field."

Komorowski was pleased with his team's effort and already pointing ahead.

"Linsly is a very good team with a lot of skilled players that play all year long," Komorowski said. "But we still have a bunch of games left to get ready for sectionals, so we will be alright."

Agcaoili had six saves in the contest for Wheeling Central, some of them turning away great Linsly scoring opportunities. Meanwhile, Cadets' junior Chaz Ghaphery turned away both Maroon Knights' shots to record the shutout in net.

Golden Bears Knock Off Red Devils For OVAC Title

By KIM NORTH

For the News-Register
WHEELING — Ever since the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference changed its soccer tournament format seven years ago, Oak Glen and St. Clairsville have dominated the girls' Class 4A field. Each has claimed two titles in that span.

So, it was no surprise to see the second-seeded Golden Bears and No. 1 Red Devils in Saturday morning's championship match on the artificial surface at Wheeling Island Stadium.

When the buzzer sounded after 80 minutes of tightly contested action, Oak Glen (12-2-1) can hang a third banner in its Hancock County gymnasium thanks to a 4-3 decision.

"It feels good," first-year Oak Glen coach Ryan Wells said of being OVAC champions. "It was a goal at the beginning of the year. We kept tracking of the point system coming through, and we thought we could probably get in. You set

those small goals to lead up to these big goals.

"I'm happy for the girls because they executed very well today."

The Golden Bears struck first when freshman Reece Enochs beat St. Clairsville goalkeeper Jaeda Nowak in the fourth minute.

St. Clairsville drew even four minutes later when freshman Mikayla Hendershot ripped a laser past Golden Bears netminder Kaylee Travis just inside the right post.

Teammate Alyssa Otto knocked down an Oak Glen goal kick and controlled the ball into the box where she slid the ball past a defender to Hendershot, who one-timed her shot.

Oak Glen regained the advantage in the 16th minute when Enochs, the daughter of former Oak Glen and WVU baseball standout Chris Enochs, sent a shot into the lower left corner that Nowak couldn't get to for a 2-1 edge.

"We've got a lot of good, young talent that has come up through the club ranks and have had some pretty



Photo by Kim North
 Oak Glen's Abigail Myers (6) and St. Clairsville's Mikayla Hendershot (18) battle for possession Saturday morning in the OVAC Class 4A title game at Wheeling Island Stadium.

good coaching," Wells said. "The future looks bright, but our six seniors are really important."

Freshman Macy Malin pulled the Red Devils (9-2-1) back into a 2-2 deadlock in the 52nd minute when

her shot from point-blank range somehow trickled past Travis and into the cage. Otto notched an assist as the ball bounced around in a scrum of players.

The lead was short-lived when junior Natalie Szyrka's blast from just

outside the box on the right wing found twine in the far corner in the 55th minute for a 3-2 Oak Glen advantage.

Maggie Kovalick, positioned right in front of the net, re-directed a nifty cross from Szyrka past Nowak for a 4-2 Oak Glen lead in the 68th minute.

However, St. Clairsville kept pushing forward and Malin's goal in the 74th minute made it a one-goal match, but that was as close as the Red Devils would get.

"They dominated most of the game because we were not playing our game," St. Clairsville coach Wes Stoner said.

"We started playing an entirely different game. We talked to them at the half and we changed it. We had more possessions

and passed to the feet instead of trying to go over the top. We're not as fast as they are back there. Our strikers aren't as fast as their defenders.

"We finally changed that and got a couple of goals, but not enough ...

not enough.
 "We had a couple of defensive breakdowns that allowed them to get two of their goals."

The high-scoring Otto was held scoreless for the first time since the season-opener.

She has 49 goals on the season which is two shy of tying Jaclyn (Dutton) Yahm for the second-most in a single season.

BOYS

OVAC Class 5A

University 1
 Morgantown 0

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — Liam Theeke broke a scoreless tie in the 76th minute as University avenged last season's loss to Morgantown to claim an OVAC championship.

Regular Season

Buckhannon-Upshur 6

Brooke 1

WELLSBURG

Hunter Adams scored the lone goal for Brooke in a loss to Buckhannon-Upshur.

Josh Ferguson had an assist and Matthew Reed stopped 11 shots for the Bruins (6-8-1).



STEUBENVILLE'S Adam DiCarlo shoots the ball toward the net as St. Clairsville's Joey Wissman (23) defends. Also pictured is St. Clairsville's Justin Muser (12) and Noah Palmer (9). T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

Steubenville blanks St. C. boys in 4A

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — Entering Saturday afternoon's Class 4A championship game, Steubenville owned 113 Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships.

For the first time since 2013, Big Red is making room for another trophy in boys soccer.

Steubenville jumped out to a 3-0 lead on third-seeded and host St. Clairsville in the first half and never looked back en route to a 4-0 victory before a good

crowd at Red Devil Stadium.

"It feels good to finish one of these out," Big Red head coach Greg Bowers said. "We'd won some regular-season (championships) and we've lost in the title game a few times in this format, so hats off to our seniors for making it happen."

It was Steubenville's senior class — all 11 of them — that proved to be the difference as they defeated the Red Devils for the second time this season.

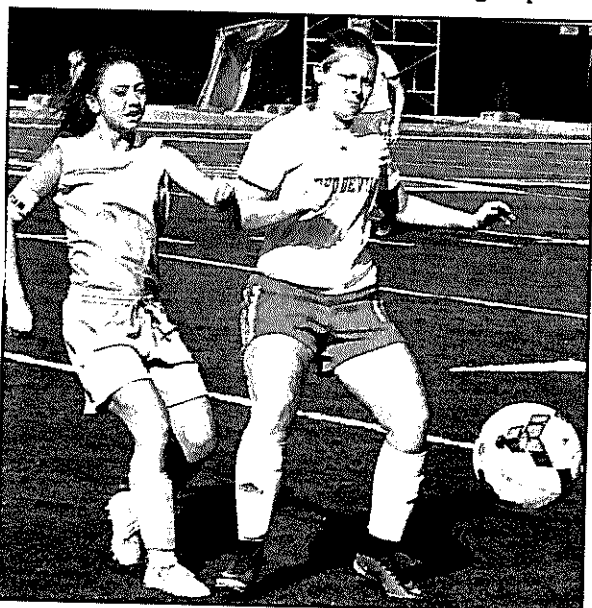
"It's a great group of kids and good group of soccer players," Bowers said.

"We're very excited about what they've given to the program."

St. Clairsville head coach Gary Watt simply gave credit where credit was due. And that was to Big Red, which seemingly played the entire game in their end of the field.

"We have a pretty inexperienced offensive side of our team and they were battling against an experienced team," Watt said. "That's what you get. Steubenville looked like they were more experienced."

See, STEUBENVILLE, Page C2



T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Abby Fifield (16) and Oak Glen's Brooklyn Loveland (24) pursue the ball during Saturday morning's OVAC Class 4A championship game at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Oak Glen stuns St. C. girls to win 4A crown

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

WHEELING — Ever since the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference changed its soccer tournament format seven years ago, Oak Glen and St. Clairsville have dominated the girls' Class 4A field. Each has claimed two titles in that span.

So, it was no surprise to see the second-seeded Golden Bears and No. 1 Red Devils in Saturday morning's championship match on the artificial surface at Wheeling Island Stadium.

When the buzzer sounded after 80 minutes of tightly contested action, Oak Glen (12-2-1) can now hang a third banner in its Hancock County gymnasium thanks to a 4-3

decision.

"It feels good," first-year Oak Glen head coach Ryan Wells said of being OVAC champions. "It was a goal at the beginning of the year. We kept track of the point system coming through, and we thought we could probably get in. You set those small goals to lead up to these big goals."

"I'm happy for the girls because they executed very well today," Wells added.

The Golden Bears struck first when freshman Reece Enochs beat St. Clairsville goalkeeper Jaeda Nowak in the fourth minute.

St. Clairsville drew even four minutes later when freshman

See, ST. C., Page C2

• Steubenville

Continued from Page C1

It might be hard to believe, but we played better (Saturday) than we did in the first game with them, but when you have a senior-loaded team that's played together for a long time, it's tough to compete with that."

Steubenville didn't waste much time in staking claim to the lead. Just 6:10 into the contest, Big Red found the back of the net. Senior Joseph Venditti tallied.

From there, Big Red had several opportunities, but St. Clairsville's Ryan Davenport played tough in the net. However, Evan Naylor snuck a ball past the St. C. keeper with 21:30 to go in the first half.

Just a few minutes later, Big Red had made it 3-0 when Adam DiCarlo took a feed from Justice Slappy for the goal.

A little more than 10 minutes into the second half, Steubenville made it a 4-0 game when Alex Eroshevich scored.

"I thought we possessed the ball well today, but I wish we would have finished a few more early, but as long as we had the ball, they couldn't score," Bowers said. "We did a good job, though, of finishing this one out."

• St. C.

Continued from Page C1

Mikayla Hendershot ripped a laser past Golden Bears net-minder Kaylee Travis just inside the right post. Teammate Alyssa Otto knocked down an Oak Glen goal kick and controlled the ball into the box where she slid the ball past a defender to Hendershot, who one-timed her shot.

Oak Glen regained the advantage in the 16th minute when Enochs, the daughter of former Oak Glen and WVU baseball standout Chris Enochs, sent a shot into the lower left corner that Nowak couldn't get to for a 2-1 edge.

"We've got a lot of good, young talent that has come up through the club ranks and have had some pretty good coaching," Wells added. "The future looks bright, but our six seniors are really important."

Freshman Macy Malin pulled the Red Devils (9-2-1) back into a 2-2 deadlock in the 52nd minute when her shot from point-blank range somehow trickled past Travis and into the cage. Otto notched an assist as the ball bounced around in a scrum of players.

The lead was short-lived when junior Natalie Szyrka's blast from just outside the box on the right wing found twine in the far corner in the 55th minute for a 3-2 Oak Glen advantage.

Maggie Kovalick, positioned right in front of the net, re-directed a nifty cross from Szyrka past Nowak for a 4-2 Oak Glen lead in the 68th minute.

However, St. Clairsville kept pushing forward and Malin's goal in the 74th minute made it a one-goal match, but that was as close as the Red Devils would get.

"They dominated most of the game because we were not playing our game," St. Clairsville head coach Wes Stoner said. "We started playing an entirely different game. We talked to them at the half and we changed it. We had more possessions and passed to the feet instead of trying to go over the top. We're not as fast as they are back there. Our strikers aren't as fast as their defenders."

The high-scoring Otto was held scoreless for the first time since the season-opener. She has 49 goals on the season which is two shy of tying Jaclyn (Dutton) Yahn for the second-most in a single season.

Oak Glen Takes Down Steubenville, 4-0

By ANDREW GRIMM
For The Intelligencer
NEW MANCHESTER

The Oak Glen Golden Bears girls soccer team came away with a 4-0 victory over Steubenville Big Red when all was said and done in Thursday night's Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 4A semifinal matchup at Oak Glen, but both coaches felt that the score was not an indication of how tightly contested the game was.

"We knew it was going to be tough, Steubenville is one of the top teams we've played this year no doubt," Oak Glen coach Ryan Wells said. "We've faced some pretty tough competition in Parkersburg South and Beaver Local and Steubenville is right up there with them. They're extremely well coached and their girls play hard so it was a really good test for us. Even our trainer on the sideline said it didn't feel like it was a 4-0 game. The score doesn't justify how well Steubenville played."

Junior Maggie Kovalcik and freshman Reece Enochs each tallied a pair of goals for Oak Glen (11-2-1), who advances to face St. Clairsville at 10 a.m. Saturday for the 4A Championship at Wheeling Island Stadium.

"We worked our game plan," Wells said. "We're lucky. Even though we have young girls we can draw something up, rep it a few times, and they execute well. We've been good at times at scoring under pressure. Post-session wise I thought we

with his team's effort despite the disappointing result.

"I'm proud of my girls and I'm proud of the effort they have shown," he said. "Their girls are good. They are fast and they are able to get free. It was a well played game. Oak Glen is a good team and they played hard, it just wasn't in the cards for us. I think anyone that was here tonight will tell you they saw two very good teams battle it out in what an OVAC semifinal should be. It's tough because you want the score to reflect that more and it doesn't. We were right there beside them they just edged us out."

After an early feeling out process, Oak Glen started to get the better of the chances. After Steubenville goalkeeper Zoe Nocera (15 saves) was forced to make a couple of nice stops, and Golden Bears sophomore Abigail Myers just missed from in close, Kovalcik opened the scoring in the 29th minute, netting a rebound off of the crossbar for a 1-0 lead.

Junior Natalie Szyrka set up Enochs for Oak Glen's second goal of the game in the 33rd minute, making it a 2-0 lead at the half. Early in the second half, the Golden Bears got a big third goal when Enochs knocked in her second off of a corner kick from freshman Brooklyn Loveland in the 42nd minute to make it a 3-0 lead.

With time winding down and Big Red's pressure feeding off by Oak Glen sophomore goalkeeper Kaylee Travis (four saves), senior

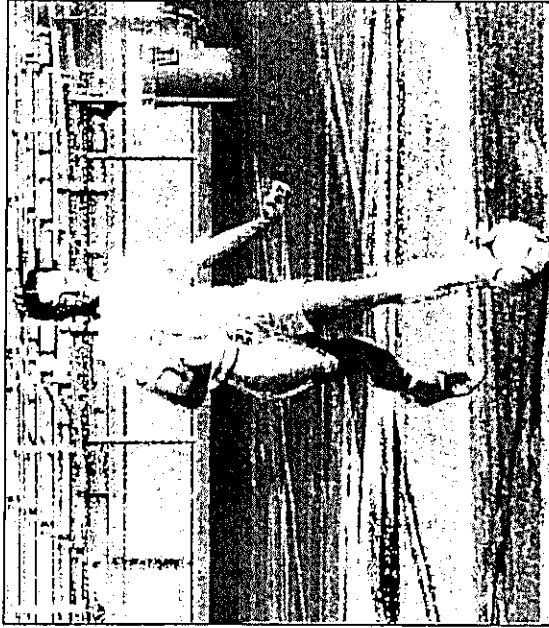


Photo by Andrew Grimm
Oak Glen's Abigail Myers controls the ball during Thursday's game against Steubenville.

saves for the Bruins. The Silver Knights were led by a Gavin Morris goal and 13 saves from Luke Daugherty.

Volleyball
Paden City d. Notre Dame 25-10, 25-16

Paden City d. Hundred 25-1, 25-11

HUNDRED - Aubrey Neff delivered 15 assists and seven points, while Kameron McClain turned in 12 points and five digs as Paden City upended Notre Dame.

The Wildcats (17-4) also defeated host Hundred behind 17 points and six assists from Mallory Yeater and eight points from Abbe Stackpole.

Beallsville d. Bridgeport 25-20, 25-10, 25-20
BEALLSVILLE - Shel-

fell in straight sets to host Wirt County but Kennedy Parsons turned in six points and three blocks, Kyndra Pilant tallied six blocks and four kills, Lenica Grimm dished out 12 assists and five points and Mady Win-ters added seven kills and four blocks for the Blue Eagles.

Monroe Central
d. Caldwell 25-19, 25-14, 25-13

WOODSFIELD - Monroe Central coach Troy Baker won his 300th game as the Seminoles swept visiting Caldwell.

Marlee Miller paced the Noles with 11 kills and 17 points; Elaina Swallow turned in 20 assists and 11 points, Olivia Gauding accounted for 10 kills and three blocks and Sydney Yoho added 17 digs.

John Marshall d. Morgantown 26-24, 19-25, 18-25, 25-17, 15-5
MORGANTOWN -

John Marshall rallied to defeat host Morgantown behind 26 kills, five blocks, four aces and five digs from Maddy Mayle.

Lauren Garia tallied 32 assists and six digs and Kori Blake added 14 digs and four aces for the Monarchs.

River d. Frontier 26-24, 25-20, 20-25, 19-25, 15-5

HANNIBAL - Lauren Flannery paced River with 21 kills, 18 digs and nine points as the Pilots edged Frontier.

Allison Bennett recorded 53 assists and six digs, while Lacey Cordery added 27 digs in the win.

Harrison Central d. St. Clairsville 23-25, 25-23, 25-15, 25-14

CADIZ - Emily Cramer led St. Clairsville with 11 kills and 11 digs and Ari Reager turned in 28 assists but host Harrison Central defeated the Red Devils in four sets.

PARK

(Continued from Page 9)

Wheeling Park was on the attack much of the second half, being caught offside multiple times before finally breaking through with another Morgan Glass goal with 7:30 left in the game.

"We had heavy legs in the second half, we weren't moving as fast," Beaver Local coach Elizabeth Connor said.

Beaver Local dropped a close contest to Springfield

said. "We definitely played better than we did the last time."

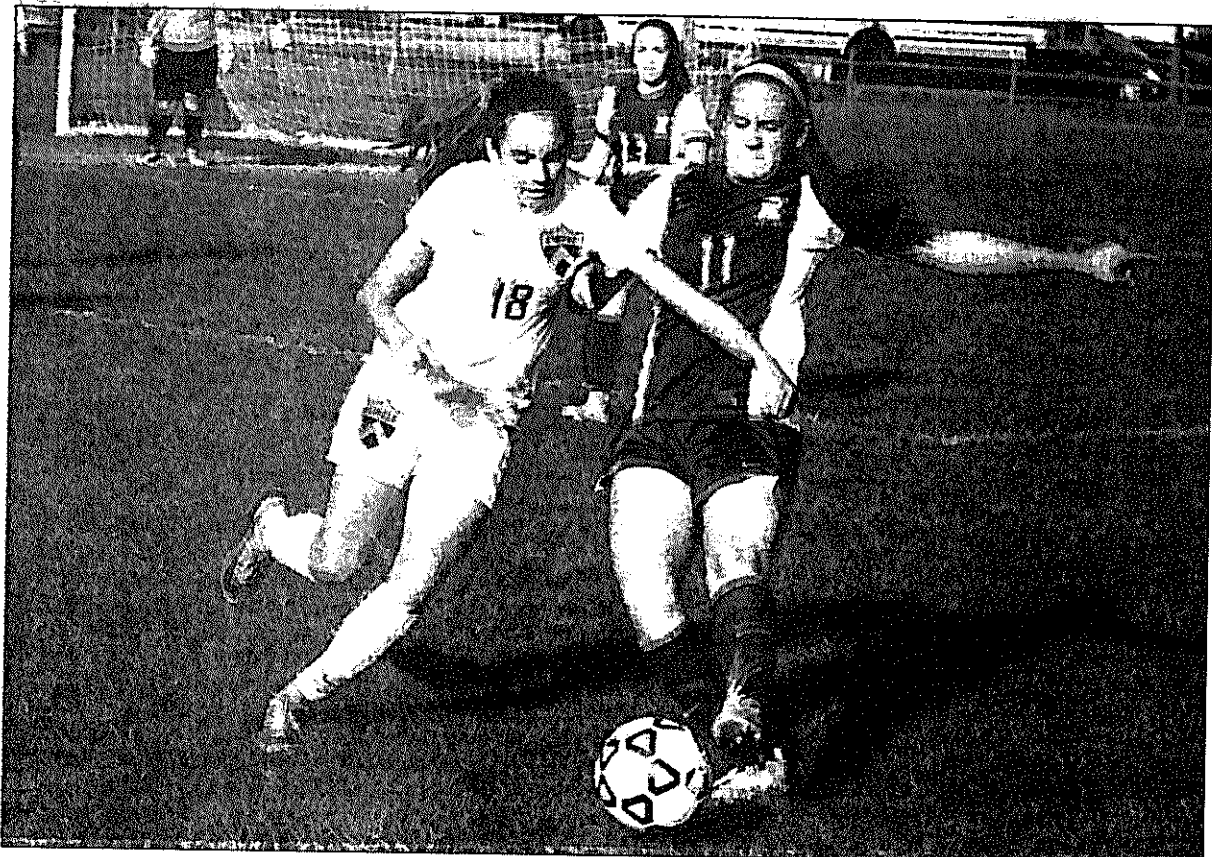
The Beavers lost the prior meeting with Wheeling Park, 4-1.

Next up for Wheeling Park is a familiar opponent.

"It's always a battle with us and University and its going to be fun to see," Hanna said.

Beaver Local has work to do as it shifts its focus to the postseason.

Linsly Defeats Madonna In OVAC Semifinal



Linsly's Athena Mariano (18) gives chase, while Madonna's Shannon Westfall attempts a pass during the OVAC 1A/3A Semifinals on Thursday at Linsly. Photo by Cody Tomer

Cadets will face Wheeling Central in championship

By CODY TOMER
Staff Writer

WHEELING — Linsly coach Chelsea Miazgowicz and the Cadets have been focusing in practice on getting everybody involved in the offense and opening up passing lanes.

That practice paid off on Thursday as Linsly dominated the time of possession and rolled to a 4-0 victory over visiting Madonna in an OVAC 1A/3A semifinal, to advance to the championship at 2 p.m. on Saturday at Wheeling Island Stadium to take on Wheeling Central.

Linsly peppered the net for 21 shots and held the Blue Dons to only three shots in the contest.

"The key for us has been keeping the ball on the ground," Miazgowicz

said. "We have really been working on keeping the ball on the ground, getting passes through and using all 11 players on the field."

The Cadets showed their teamwork early and often. They delivered shot after shot in the first half but Madonna goalkeeper Kasey Canei stood strong, holding Linsly to just one goal in the opening half.

That lone goal came off the foot of Athena Mariano in the 15th minute, on an assist from Clare Miller, to give Linsly the 1-0 edge.

"We were hanging with them in the first half," Madonna coach Bob Kolanko said. "Linsly had a couple of great opportunities but we stopped them on every shot except one, which was from the same spot they scored three goals from last

time we played them and we didn't defend it."

The Blue Dons continued to defend an abundance of Linsly shots early in the second half, until Sarah McDermott finally beat the defense in the 19th minute and rifled a shot into the net for a 2-0 advantage.

The goal gave the Cadets all of the momentum and less than two minutes later, Mariano garnered her second netter of the night to create a 3-0 cushion.

"We gave zero effort in the second half," Kolanko said. "We asked them to do three simple things that could have changed the game in the second half.

See LINSLY, Page 10



Wheeling Park penalty kick as on Thursday during semifinal at

Park To Ti

By

CALCUTTA start against Wheeling Central in the second half of the final soccer tournament.

The Patriots beat the Beavers in the OVAC Class 5A day at Wheeling Island Stadium.

"They jumped on us in the second half and we couldn't combine and control the game."

The Beavers finished the game with a 1-0 victory over Taylor off a Riley Taylor goal in the first half.

A little bit later in the game, a corner taken by the Patriots headed the ball in the net with 29:59 left in the first half.

Wheeling Park finished the first half when Madison Taylor scored with 6:56 remaining in the first half.

The scoring in the second half was tied the game with

Defeats Madonna OVAC Semifinal

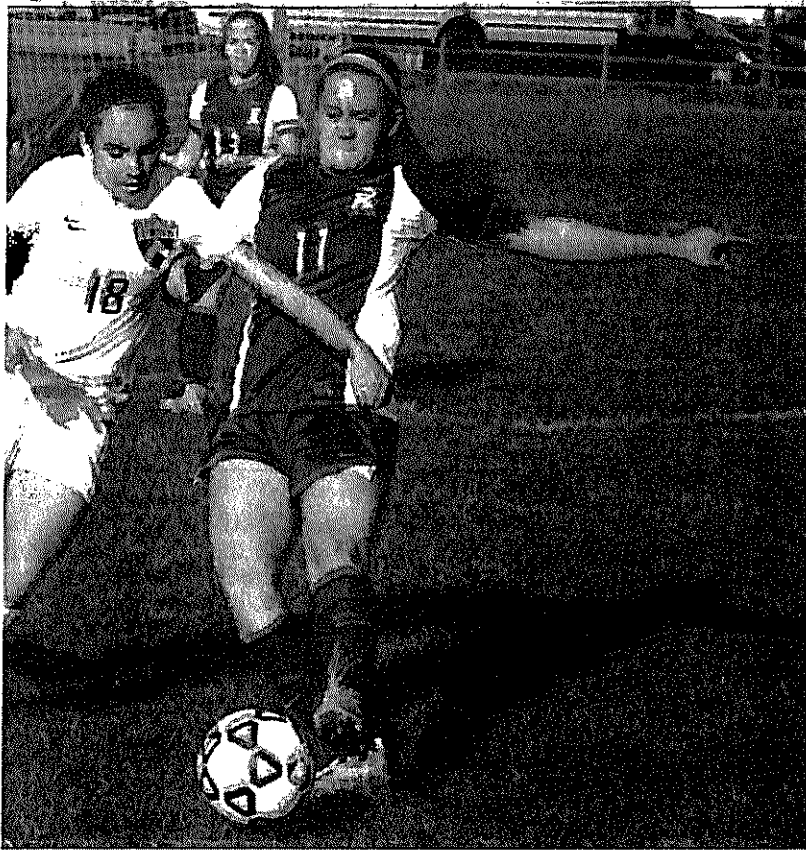


Photo by Cody Toner

s chase, while Madonna's Shannon Westfall attempts a pass during Thursday at Linsly.

Wheeling Central in championship

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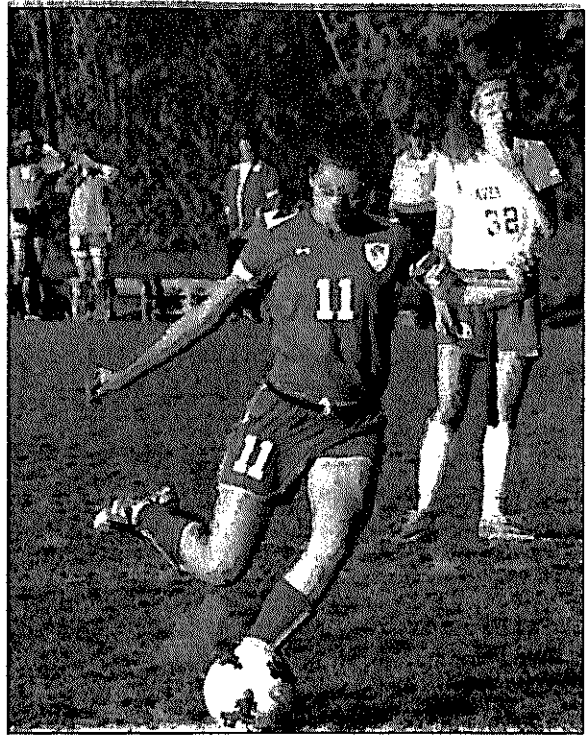


Photo by Dan Santarelli

Wheeling Park's Morgan Glass scores on a penalty kick as Beaver Local's Emily Monte looks on Thursday during a Class 5A OVAC girls soccer semifinal at Beaver Local High School.

Park Advances To Title Game

By DAN SANTARELLI
For The Intelligencer

CALCUTTA — Beaver Local jumped out to a quick start against Wheeling Park but couldn't hold on in the second half on Thursday in the girls OVAC 5A semifinal soccer tournament game.

The Patriots beat the Beavers 3-2 to advance to the OVAC Class 5A final against University set for Saturday at Wheeling Island Stadium.

"They jumped all over us, taking a two to nothing lead," Wheeling Park coach Carrie Hanna said. "In the second half we needed to calm down and play our game to combine and connect passes, not forcing things."

The Beavers first goal of the game came from Kierra Taylor off a Riley Britt pass with 32:28 left in the first half.

A little bit later, the Beavers (10-3) made the most of a corner taken by Kierra Taylor when Leah Pancake headed the ball in the net to make the game 2-0 Beavers with 29:59 left in the first half of action.

Wheeling Park (13-1-2) got on the board late in the first half when Morgan Glass lined up for a penalty kick with 6:56 remaining and got past a diving Jackie Francis.

The scoring in the second half was opened up by Wheeling Park when Patriot freshman Gracelyn Hanna tied the game with 31:07 left in the second half.

See PARK, Page 10

Staubenville played."

Junior Maggie Kovalcik and freshman Reece Enoch each tallied a pair of goals for Oak Glen (1-2-1), who advances to face St. Clairsville at 10 a.m. Saturday for the 4A Championship at Wheeling Island Stadium.

"We worked our game plan," Wells said. "We're lucky. Even though we have young girls we can draw something up, rep it a few times, and they execute well. We've been good at times at scoring under pressure. Possession wise I thought we possessed the ball as much as we wanted to, but still Stuebenville was able to counter. We have some things on film that we can definitely use going into Saturday."

Big Red (6-4-1) coach Jared Robinson was happy

crossbar for a 1-0 lead.

Junior Natalie Szyrka set up Enoch's for Oak Glen's second goal of the game in the 33rd minute, making it a 2-0 lead.

Early in the second half, the Golden Bears got a big third goal when Enoch's knocked in her second off of a corner kick from freshman Brooklyn Loveland in the 42nd minute to make it a 3-0 lead.

With time winding down and Big Red's pressure fended off by Oak Glen sophomore goalkeeper Kaylee Travis (four saves), senior Kennedy Graves connected with Kovalcik to extend the lead to 4-0 and put an exclamation point on the Golden Bears' win. Wells expects a very close game on Saturday, and his team was already thinking about bringing home the

It's ok to be excited. They're very business like even though they are young. It's great as a coach because these girls show up every day ready to play. St. Clairsville is a well-rounded team. They've got one loss on the season and they played Beaver Local tough.

If you compare scores up and down the schedules it's pretty similar. The girls are excited to be up early to play on Wheeling Island at 10 a.m.

Boys Regular Season Brooke 4

Tyler Consolidated 1
WELLSBURG — Kommer Govey netted a pair of goals, while Nick Cunney and Matt Reed also found the back of the net to lead Brooke over visiting Tyler Consolidated. Liam Riska gathered five

75-100, 42-10
Paden City d. Hundredred 25-1, 25-11

HUNDREDD — Aubrey Neff delivered 15 assists and seven points, while Kamron McClain turned in 12 points and five digs as Padon City upended Notre Dame.

The Wildcats (17-4) also defeated host Hundredred behind 17 points and six assists from Malory Yeater and eight points from Abbe Stackpole.

Bealsville d. Bridgeport 25-20, 25-10, 25-20

BEALLSVILLE — Shelby Matheny gathered 24 digs, 11 points and seven kills, while teammate Kamden Dulesky added 10 kills and eight digs for Bridgeport in a road loss to Bealsville.

Wirt County d. Magnolia 25-21, 25-7, 25-16

ELIZABETH — Magnolia

PARK

(Continued from Page 9)

Wheeling Park was on the attack much of the second half, being caught offside multiple times before finally breaking through with another Morgan Glass goal with 7:30 left in the game. "We had heavy legs in the second half, we weren't moving as fast," Beaver Local coach Elizabeth Connor said.

Beaver Local dropped a close contest to Springfield the night before, 2-1. Jackie Francis had 11 saves for Beaver Local while Wheeling Park's Deanna Crumm had 13 saves.

"Wheeling Park is an excellent team that gives us great competition," Connor said.

said, "We definitely played better than we did the last time."

The Beavers lost the prior meeting with Wheeling Park, 4-1.

Next up for Wheeling Park is a familiar opponent. "It's always a battle with us and University and it's going to be fun to see," Hanna said.

Beaver Local has work to do as it shifts its focus to the postseason.

"We need to continue to work hard in practice because we are definitely going to see tough teams like Wheeling Park come state tournament time," Connor said.

LINSLEY

(Continued from Page 9)

"Their goalie was playing with the sun in her face, so we said get shots and we didn't have any shots in the second half. We told them to play the ball at their feet, instead they just played kick ball and kicked it as far away from them as possible.

"We said move away from the opponent and create space and they just stood around. I am very disappointed in the second half effort.

"This was our season. The last three

years we have found ourselves in the finals and we won it last year.

"This is a very disheartening place for us to not be going there on Saturday."

Faith Pauli delivered the dagger in the 36th minute with a flawless shot over a leaping Canel and into the side of the net, sending Linsley to the championship with Wheeling Central.

Central and Linsley have already split the season series, both teams earning shutout victories on their home turf. "We are really looking forward to

playing them again," Miazgowicz said. "We went 50/50 with them this season and I am really excited to be playing them for a third time, especially in the championship because I think both teams deserve to be in the finals.

"Both games have been very close games but anything can happen and our girls will come prepared to play."

Linsley goalkeeper Johni Lech gathered three saves and Canel collected eight saves for the Dons. "Kasey plays big for us," Kolanko

said. "She comes out and plays the ball and comes up big on big plays."

With the win, the Cadets avenged last year's 2-0 loss to the Dons in the OVAC Semifinals. Although, there are many new faces on this year's squad, the memory of that contest still remains in the minds of several players.

"I think that did play a factor for the girls who were apart of that team," Miazgowicz said. "We do have a few new players but for some of these girls, it was really great to have this game at home."

STEELERS

(Continued from Page 9)

"You never want to give up 100 yards and you never want to give up 200 yards. So now we got to answer for it and we look forward to doing that."

Good thing, because Baltimore (2-1) figures to throw more of the same on Sunday.

The Ravens have gone over 130 yards rushing in each of their first three games, including a lopsided blowout loss to Jacksonville

linebacker T.J. Watt — both of whom were on the sideline in Chicago in shorts because of injuries — will help. Tuitt and Watt practiced on Thursday and are expected to play.

It will take more than Tuitt and Watt to fix the mistakes that kept popping up against Chicago, when Pittsburgh either over-pursued, took poor angles or giving into the lure of a highlight-reel hit when the situation called for a more

shoulders and head because you think you're going to knock them down," Dupree said.

The examples were too numerous to count. Dupree tried to drill Howard for a loss, didn't get Howard for the ground and Howard squirted loose for a first down.

On the winning touchdown, middle linebacker Ryan Shazier also lost containment several times and over pursued on

He only saw the field for a handful of snaps despite being one of the better run-stopping outside linebackers in the league during his lengthy career.

Coach Mike Tomlin declined to get into specifics when asked why Harrison was again a minimal part of the plan. "I'm not singling out any position, and I think a discussion about his participation or non-participation does that," Tomlin said.

NOTES: RB Le'Veon Bell

—OVAC Soccer Championships its Capture First AC Soccer Title



Photo by Josh Strope

occer team celebrates its 4-1 victory against Linsly to win the first on-field story Saturday at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Painful Memory of Last Season's Loss

"It is great. Last year we had it taken away from us and it is so surreal to finally have this," Wheeling Central captain Claire Dieffenbaugher said. "I am a senior and I couldn't be prouder of this team. We have worked hard and we definitely deserved it."

"It is crazy. Without Kenadee (Wayt) always scoring those goals, she is always in the right place. We have Maria (Dzmura) who scores. People can shoot from anywhere. We just have the perfect team."

Coaches and players are often notorious for saying "the past is the past." Not Wheeling Central. This team never forgot about the heart-breaking loss to Madonna. It was

talked about all year, all season and all week coming into Saturday's game.

"That has been our motivation for the entire season," Dieffenbaugher said. "Oh yeah, we definitely talked about it."

Linsly was strong following the opening kickoff, but it was Wheeling Central that drew first blood in the 10th minute.

Wayt took a pass and lifted a shot over Linsly goalie Johni Lech. Lech, who came out to challenge Wayt, was able to get a hand on the ball to slow it down, but Wayt got to it first and buried it in the net.

See Knights, Page B2



Photo by Josh Strope

Wheeling Park's Morgan Glass (11) battles for possession with University's Stephanie Chmiel during Saturday's OVAC Class 5A girls' title game at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Park Wins 5A Championship

By JOSH STROPE
 Sports Editor

WHEELING — Wheeling Park and University may be the two most evenly matched girls' soccer teams in the state. But for the past two years, it has been the Hawks that have had the upperhand.

For at least one day, that changed Saturday at Wheeling Island Stadium.

The Patriots struck first with two early goals and made it stand in a 2-0 victory to capture an OVAC Class 5A championship. It is the first soccer title for Wheeling Park since 2014 and ended the Hawks' two-year run as champs.

"This means everything and this senior group is so special," Wheeling Park coach Carrie Hanna said. "I just wanted to come in and help them realize how special they were and let them realize their potential. They set the tone of the game and they showed everyone what they are capable of doing."

Last season, Wheeling Park lost to University in an OVAC semifinal in a shootout. They also lost in the regional as University went on to win a state title.

Needless to say, Wheeling Park has a lot of built-up frustration when it comes to University. A good start was a must.

See Park, Page B2

Take Down Cadets, 4-1

We're very fortunate that we had this they definitely had some chances



Knights Capture First OVAC Soccer Title



Photo by Josh Strope

The Wheeling Central girls' soccer team celebrates its 4-1 victory against Linsly to win the first on-field OVAC soccer title in school history Saturday at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Central Erases Painful Memory of Last Season's Loss

By **JOSH STROPE**
Sports Editor

WHEELING — What a difference a year has made for the Wheeling Central girls' soccer team.

The Maroon Knights have spent the past 12 months agonizing over last season's double-overtime loss in the OVAC Class 1A/3A championship.

No more.

For the first time in school history, the Wheeling Central Maroon Knights are on top of the conference, winning the school's first on-field OVAC championship with a convincing 4-1 victory against Linsly on Saturday at Wheeling Island Stadium.

"It is great. Last year we had it taken away from us and it is so surreal to finally have this," Wheeling Central captain Claire Dieffenbaugher said. "I am a senior and I couldn't be prouder of this team. We have worked hard and we definitely deserved it.

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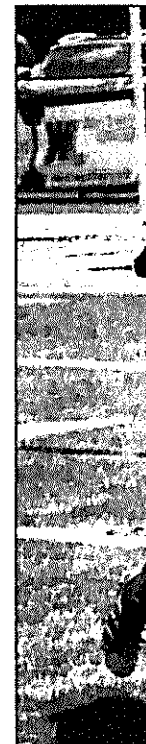
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See **Knights**, Page B2



Wheeling P possession during Saturday game at Wh

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Crusaders Take Down Cadets, 4-1

By **ANDREW GRIMM**
For the News-Register

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they definitely had some chances." Linsly (11-4) opened the scoring



Wheeling Park since 2014 and ended the Hawks' two-year run as champs.

"This means everything and this senior group is so special," Wheeling Park coach Carrie Hanna said. "I just wanted to come in and help them realize how special they were and let them realize their potential. They set the tone of the game and they showed everyone what they are capable of doing."

Last season, Wheeling Park lost to University in an OVAC semifinal in a shootout. They also lost in the regional as University went on to win a state title.

Needless to say, Wheeling Park has a lot of built-up frustration when it comes to University. A good start was a must.

See Park, Page B2



Photo by Andrew Grimm
Linsly's Manuel Sulta and Steubenville Catholic's Kolbe Rice go after the ball during Saturday's game.

"That has been our motivation for the entire season," Dieffenbaugher said. "Oh yeah, we definitely talked about it."

Linsly was strong following the opening kickoff, but it was Wheeling Central that drew first blood in the 10th minute.

Wayt took a pass and lifted a shot over Linsly goalie John Lech, who came out to challenge Wayt, who was able to get a hand on the ball to slow it down, but Wayt got to it first and buried it in the net.

See Knights, Page B2

Crusaders Take Down Cadets, 4-1

they definitely had some chances."

Linsly (11-4) opened the scoring with a goal from sophomore Alvaro Ramirez in the fourth minute, but Central answered right back in the seventh minute with Irvin's first, directing a shot from senior Joe Kuebler past Linsly netminder Chaz Ghaphery (seven saves) to even the score at 1-1.

"It's pretty exciting," Irvin said. "It was a team effort; it wasn't just me. It was such a great game. It was amazing to be a part of it."

See Crusaders, Page B2

Central captain Claire Dieffenbaugher said. "I am a senior and I couldn't be prouder of this team. We have worked hard and we definitely deserved it."

"It is crazy. Without Kenadec (Wayt) always scoring those goals, she is always in the right place. We have Maria (Dzmura) who scores. People can shoot from anywhere. We just have the perfect team."

Coaches and players are often notorious for saying "the past is the past." Not Wheeling Central. This team never forgot about the heart-breaking loss to Madonna. It was

We're very fortunate that we had this opportunity."

Irvin factored in to all four Central (10-2) goals, and junior goalkeeper Travis Shore made 15 saves.

"He's one of our senior leaders," Kopecha said. "We rely on him as well as a few others to score some goals, and he was feeling it. We're glad that he was able to come through and help us get this big win."

"(Shore) came up with some great saves. They had a lot of possession and created a lot of good chances for themselves. We were fortunate that our keeper was on his game because

Steubenville Boys Get Victory Over St. Clairsville, 4-0

route to a 4-0 victory before a good crowd at Red Devil Stadium.

"It feels good to finish one of these out," Big Red coach Greg Bowers said. "We'd won some regular-season (championships) and we've lost in the title game a few times in this format, so hats off to our seniors for making it happen."

It was Steubenville's senior class — all 11 of them — that proved to be the difference as they defeated the Red Devils for the second time this season.

"It's a great group of kids and good

By SETH STASKEY
For the News-Register

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — Entering Saturday afternoon's Class 4A championship game, Steubenville owned 113 Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships.

For the first time since 2013, Big Red is making room for another trophy in boys soccer.

Steubenville jumped out to a 3-0 lead on third-seeded and host St. Clairsville in the first half and never looked back en

group of soccer players," Bowers said. "We're very excited about what they've given to the program."

St. Clairsville coach Gary Watt simply gave credit where credit was due. And that was to Big Red, which seemingly played the entire game in their end of the field.

"We have a pretty inexperienced offensive side of our team and they were battling against an experienced team," Watt said.

"That's what you get. Steubenville

See Steubenville, Page B7

LINSLEY

Continued from page B1

"We definitely (shot ourselves in the foot)," Young said. "I think that's a credit to Linsley but also, we've got to be more mature."

"We've got to get better offensively and we know that."

The Cadets went back to work with 4:52 remaining in the half, taking over at their 44. Hirt hit Trevin Tush for 44 and two plays later, Nick Falbo went around right end and found the end zone from 16 yards out for a 14-0 halftime lead.

Linsley held a 206-33 advantage in total first-half yards, as Hirt threw for 156.

"But they made some tremendous adjustments in the second half," Depew said of the Knights. "We struggled to move the ball but our kids held on for dear life and our defense played up to its potential when we needed it most."

"I thought it was a tremendous win for us."

Wheeling Central dialed back the defensive pressure in the second half, hoping to make Linsley grind out yards on the ground instead of picking up chunks at a time through the air. It worked as the Cadets were limited to 121 yards after halftime.

Still trailing by two scores, the Maroon Knights took over at the Cadets 45 with 7:47 left in the third quarter. Wheeling Central picked up a first down on a third-and-9 when McGhee found Patrick Brown for 17 yards. It was one of two Central third-down conversions in 13 tries.

One play later McGhee, who rushed for 49 yards on 18 carries, found daylight up the middle and sprinted into the end zone to cut the lead in half.

After the teams traded punts, the Cadets went to

work on what ended up being the winning scoring drive. Linsley moved 68 yards in nine plays — all runs. The march culminated in Falbo's second touchdown run, this one coming from the 17.

He had a 46-yard scoring run called back a play earlier because of his own offensive facemask penalty.

"We tried to gameplan for their pressure and in the second half they backed off their pressure, which forced us to do things differently," Depew said.

"They took away the things that were working for us and forced us to go to the ground."

"That's not something I would say in previous years we've had any success with, but I credit our kids for getting that mentality and moving the ball when we needed to."

Again needing two scores, Central got to the Linsley 29 on a 14-yard Dawson Wear run. However, McGhee was picked off on the next play at the 1 by the Cadets' Hunter Kelly.

Anthony Robbins gave the Maroon Knights some life when he pounced on a fumble at the Linsley 39 with 6:39 left. Seven plays later Central faced a fourth-and-goal from the 20 and McGhee lobbed a ball into the corner of the end zone where Robbins leaped up and took it away from the defender to make it 20-13 after the PAT failed.

Bray Price then intercepted Hirt and returned it to the Central 42. But the Knights turned the ball over on downs as Kelly broke up a fourth-down pass.

"He's a special athlete," Depew said of Kelly. "He's a really smart kid



Photo by Kyle Lutz

Linsley's Eli Petho runs the ball after a reception against Wheeling Central Saturday.

and a really nice kid. 50 yards for the Cadets.

"We're excited that he is just a ninth grader and is already contributing the way he has."

Petho had 107 yards of total offense and Tush

hailed in four passes for up for next week."

Neither side got much of anything going the rest of the half, and the game remained tied after 40 minutes.

Linsley came out strong to start the second half, but Shore had the answers and kept the game tied until his teammates took control of the game with two goals in a span of 31 seconds.

Irvin connected from in close for his second, which proved to be the game-

ing it back the past three years has just been amazing."

After the quick goals, frustration started to set in for the Cadets. Despite putting the pressure on most of the second half, the could not find a way to get anything past Shore.

"We definitely controlled the second half," Linsley coach Greg Martin said.

"They counter so well. They did that I win.

to us last year, too. They are very efficient with their goal scoring. We created enough chances to make this a game; we just didn't put them away. I think our emotions just got the best of us when those goals went in. We just didn't get switched back on and refocused."

Irvin completed the hat trick in the 69th minute, giving the Crusaders the 4-1 win.

n't in our favor.

"We are a pretty fast team and have some girls that are really, really quick and up until this point, Kenadee hadn't scored against us. We had been able to manage her pretty well, it just

Athena (Mariano) causes a lot of things to happen. We wanted to mark Athena, keep an eye on Claire and we knew what to expect. We played our game, kept the ball on the ground and stuck to our plan."

on the victory with a breakthrough goal in the 65th minute that all but insured the OVAC soccer title would finally make its way to the Wheeling Central trophy case. "I am very excited for the girls and they took care of business,"

that 2-0 leads are nothing to be excited about. We knew even when we got to 3-0 to not be comfortable. Anything can happen, but that second goal was huge and I am just so happy with the selflessness of this team. They

speed to beat a Linsley defender

CRUSADERS

Continued from page B1

KNIGHTS

Continued from page B1

when we got to 3-0 to not be comfortable. Anything can happen, but that second goal was huge and I am just so happy with the selflessness of this team. They are all about not who gets the goal, but that we get the goal."

Dieffenbauger is the do-it-all player for the Maroon Knights. She can pass, she can defend, she leads and she scores. Dieffenbauger added the third goal on a long shot that just slipped past the Cadets goalie.

Wayt put the exclamation point

but insured the OVAC success would finally make its way to the Wheeling Central trophy case.

"I am very excited for the girls and they took care of business," Barack said. "For the seniors, (last year) was on their mind. They wanted this. They wanted to avoid the shutout."

"It was a little disappointing because I thought we started strong, but they were able to finish one and then another right before half," Linsly coach Chelsea Miazgowiec said. "We were ready to go and it just was-

Claire and we knew what to expect. We played our game, kept the ball on the ground and stuck to our plan."

Miller scored the lone Cadets goal on a free kick in the final minute to avoid the shutout.

really quick and up until this point, Kenadee hadn't scored against us. We had been able to manage her pretty well, it just didn't work out this game."

Wheeling Central has a division championship it won in 2012 when the tournament format included all classes. This is the first time the Maroon Knights have won since the playoff format for the individual classes since it was instituted in 2014.

PARK

Continued from page B1

The Patriots couldn't have asked for a better one.

The Patriots jumped in front 65 seconds in as Lauren Schultz found Morgan Glass at the back corner, and the senior standout buried it past University goalie Maya Shetty for a 1-0 lead.

"I am just always trying to be backside in case it trickles in like that," Glass said.

"It was great that we were able to jump on them early."

A little more than a minute later it was Glass on the assist as

Abbey Anderson was able to sneak a ball past Shetty and the Patriots held an important two-goal advantage.

"That is exactly how we talked about it and how we wanted to do it," Hanna said.

"We would have liked to keep those combining the rest of the game, too, but it was great starting on the front foot and staying there."

The Hawks were stunned and had little offense in the first half, managing one shot on Wheeling

Park goalie Deanna Crumm as the Patriots controlled the first 40 minutes.

"Wheeling Park is an absolutely outstanding team," University co-coach Graham Peace said.

"I am proud of our girls. We have had an outstanding season so far. We came out flat in those first couple minutes, and Wheeling Park, to their credit, took advantage of it."

"When you get scored on that quickly, it does (take the wind out of your sails), but I am proud

of how the girls responded.

"We kept calm and we knew we would have to weather a storm early on. We responded really well, but Wheeling Park is an outstanding soccer team."

The Hawks had a couple scoring chances in the second half, but free kicks went wide or over the net and Crumm made a few solid saves.

She stopped five shots to record a shutout.

"It feels great because University is a really great rival for us,"

Glass said. "We knew we had to play our game and keep possession. If you keep control of the ball, you keep control of the game."

"As a senior, this is awesome to win this. We know we can beat University now and we need to keep that focus."

The championship is an OVAC-best 12th title for Wheeling Park, and second for Hanna, who also led the Patriots to a title in 2000 during her first stint as coach.

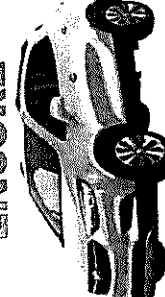
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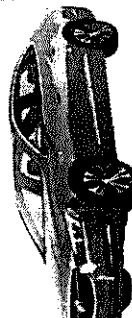
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HUGE SELECTIONS FANTASTIC PRICES' AWARD WINNING SERVICE

Patriots Fall to Hawks in OVAC Semis

BY TODD MURRAY

The Dominion Post
MORGANTOWN — Wheeling Park boys' soccer goalkeeper Zachary Calvert never shies away from the pressure of a penalty kick shootout, even if a berth in the title game of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference tournament is at stake.

After all, the pressure is supposed to be on the shooter, not the keeper.

"We try to guess which way they're going with the ball," Calvert said. "Ultimately, you try to force them one way or the other. They are very difficult, but overall it's fun."

Calvert nearly emerged as the winning goalkeeper Monday, making two big saves, before UHS prevailed, 4-3, and advanced to Saturday's OVAC championship game.

The contest goes into the books as a 0-0 double-overtime tie,



Photo by Kathleen Batten/The Dominion Post
 Wheeling Park's Trip Meredith (15) and University's Joseph Biafora battle for possession of the ball.

which is quite a turnaround from team," Wheeling Park coach Mario Julian said. "We played the 3-0 loss the Patriots suffered in Morgantown on Aug. 31.

"We're coming together as a importance of playing 80 min-

utes."

Calvert nearly made a stop on University's first shootout kick. He blocked Mason Shockley's try, but the ball squirted away and bounced into the back of the net.

He made some key plays throughout the contest to give the Patriots a chance. His teammates did, too. They are a much different team than the one that lost to the Hawks by three goals on the last day of August.

"I feel like we've come together as a team," Calvert said. "We've gotten a lot closer. Our ability to play like we did on the field today was a lot of hard work and dedication we've really worked hard for."

"There is always room for improvement. I feel like we were capable of winning, but I would accept a loss against this team. They are very good."

See PATRIOTS, Page 14

Class 4A
 St. Clairsville 2
 East Liverpool 2
 St. Clairsville wins
 penalty kicks, 3-2
EAST LIVERPOOL —
 St. Clairsville's Alec St. Clair, Kyle Hendershot and Justin Musser all had successful attempts and Red Devils goalie Ryan Davenport made three saves as they advanced to the Class 4A title game to face Steubenville on their home field.
 St. Clair and Noah Brown scored in regulation for the Red Devils (5-3-2).
 Morgantown 2, Weir 2
 Morgantown wins
 on penalty kicks
WEIRTON — Weir lost a heartbreaker in the OVAC Class 5A semifinal at Jimmy Carey Stadium, dropping a tightly contested 3-2 decision to the Morgantown Mohigans in a shootout.
 Brendan Carpenter and Knutilla scored for the Red Riders (11-3-1) in regula-