

Cougars end season in playoff loss

Tristan Stocker
IVN Contributing Writer

Soccer season draws to a close after a fantastic year full of blood and sweat and tears for the Illinois Valley boys' soccer team who just recently met their match in their first and final playoff game against Western Mennonite (6-4-2) up in Salem Wednesday, Nov. 1 - the final score set at 0-2.



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

No. 11 senior Action Phokaeo receives a throw-in during the home win against Lakeview earlier in the season.

The boys blasted up to Salem with high hopes after a four game winning streak, however, Huver Rodriguez their star player was still recovering from an ankle injury he received while playing Canyonville, which undeniably set them back.

"He was probably playing at about 70 percent," said head coach Neigel Hruska. "I mean you could tell; he could play, but he was being very cautious on it. If he would have been at 100 percent that would have helped out a lot, but we still hung in there pretty good and got a couple of good shots in."

Action Phokaeo another great player actually took a pretty hard spill on his knee right off the bat, which worried him along with the rest of the team.

"It was definitely a nail-biting game. Nobody was disappointed with it," said Hruska. "They didn't get dominated. It was a pretty even game. It was making grey hairs on my head."

This was the team's third trip to the playoffs: the first time way back in 1986, and more recently, six years ago in 2011.

The Illinois Valley High School is also getting placed into the 2A division, which means no more Cascade Christian and no more St. Mary's.

"We're gonna be the biggest school in that division, so hopefully that'll help us out to



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

No. 14 senior Huver Rodriguez fights to regain possession against a Honker forward during early season play. Rodriguez was fighting an ankle injury during the loss in Salem.

compete," said Hruska.

Hruska is looking forward to coaching next year along with assistant coach Dustin Henderson.

"We've got nine freshmen supposedly coming up," said Hruska. "So between me and Dustin we should be able to have each other's backs to get the kids going through."

Pettis sets NCAA mark as No. 12 Washington rolls Oregon 38-3

By Tim Booth
AP Sports Writer

SEATTLE (AP) — After five games without a spectacular moment on special teams, it was time for Dante Pettis to stand alone in the NCAA record book.

Pettis became the NCAA's career leader in punt return touchdowns and had a 47-yard TD reception, leading No. 12 Washington past Oregon 38-3 on Saturday night.

"If he makes the first guy miss, it's usually a touchdown," Washington quarterback Jake Browning said.

A year after breaking a 12-game losing streak to the Ducks, Washington (8-1, 5-1 Pac-12, No. 12 CFP) kept alive its hopes for a return to the

College Football Playoff by thumping its rival to the south.

The blowout was sparked by Pettis on a frigid, wet night along the shore of Lake Washington. After a sluggish start, Pettis' ninth career punt return touchdown early in the second quarter started an avalanche of Washington points.

"Punt returns for touchdowns are rare ... and I already had three this year so it wasn't like, 'I haven't got a punt return in a long time,'" Pettis said. "Each week I was going into it and just trying to get the best return that I could."

Pettis caught the line drive from Oregon's Adam Stack, made the initial defenders miss, hurdled an attempted tackle from Stack at the Oregon 40 and found open space as he sprinted to the end zone. The 64-yard

play was the fourth punt return for a score this season by Pettis, tying a Pac-12 record. He had punt return touchdowns in three straight games in September to pull even with Antonio Perkins (Oklahoma) and Wes Welker (Texas Tech) on the NCAA list.

"We didn't get enough hang time on it to get our guys down there," Oregon coach Willie Taggart said. "That's like Football 101. When you punt the ball you've got to allow your guys to get down there and we didn't do a good job with that kick."

It was just the start of a big night for the senior. He finished with four catches for 87 yards and put the game out of reach on the first drive of the second half, getting behind the Oregon defense for his seventh touchdown reception of the season and a 24-3 lead.

"He's just got a knack," Washington coach Chris Petersen said. "He's a really deceptive guy even as a receiver. He's a long strider that has tremendous suddenness to him."

Lavon Coleman added a remarkable 31-yard, catch-and-run touchdown later in the third quarter. Coleman was just trying to get a first down on third-and-12, but ended up in the end zone. He was spun down by Oregon's Jimmie Swain, but instead of hitting the turf, Coleman's backside bounced off Swain's chest. Coleman popped up and raced the final 20 yards for the score.

Myles Gaskin rushed for 123 yards, including a 34-yard touchdown in the first half where he faked a reverse to Salvon Ahmed, kept the ball and got great downfield blocking. Ahmed later added a

58-yard touchdown run as part of Washington's 21-point third quarter.

Browning threw for 204 yards, and his two TD passes tied Keith Price for the school record at 75.

Brandon Burmeister started at quarterback for Oregon as the Ducks (5-5, 2-5) kept Justin Herbert out for one more game due to a collarbone injury. Herbert has not played since being injured in late September.

Royce Freeman rushed for 122 yards, but the Ducks had almost no passing attack. After gaining 116 yards on their first two possessions, Oregon gained just 73 total yards on the next eight possessions.

"I think we can run the ball better if we can throw it better," Taggart said. "It's good to see that our guys are able to run the football when everyone knows we're going to run."

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