

Pioneers try to regain 'emotion' after loss

by DAVE MAGNUSON
Staff writer

A touch of irony will plague the Sandy Pioneers football team Friday when it faces the visiting Clackamas Cavaliers in a non-league contest.

Historically, interconference games tend to be of less importance than the other eight games on the schedule — the games against league teams. The non-leaguers do not count in league standings, which are the basis for entering the state playoffs.

The irony is that both Sandy and Clackamas are in must-win situations. As Pioneer coach Mike Funderburg points out, the teams involved have some similarities.

"They're 2-3 right now. It's a make-or-break game for them also. They've won a couple of games very similar to the way we won and they've gotten blown out a couple of times, just like we have," Funderburg said. "I think the team that comes in here, makes the fewest mistakes and plays with some feeling (will be victorious)."

Feeling — or the lack thereof — was the culprit in the Pioneers' 34-7 loss to the David Douglas Scots, who snapped a three-game losing streak in the Mount Hood Conference game last Thursday evening at David Douglas.

"We had zero emotion Thursday

night. We've got to start playing with a little emotion," Funderburg said, adding that coaches can only do so much to motivate individual players. "You can try to motivate all you want, but there's still an intrinsic factor: When (the players) are out in the huddle and they're out on the field, they've got to be able to rise to the occasion themselves.

"You can only talk about it so much. There have got to be some people taking leadership out there."

Unfortunately for the Pioneers, a prime leader on the field was Ron Gray of the Scots, who ran for 177 yards on 17 carries, including a touchdown. Additionally, Gray threw a 35-yard touchdown pass to his twin brother, Bob, which helped seal the Scot triumph.

Sandy defender Randy Wheeler got Sandy off to a good start with an interception at the David Douglas 43-yard line, just a little over two minutes into the game.

But the Scots returned the disfavor just 1:14 later. That interception set up a 37-yard touchdown run by Bob Gray with 6:35 to go in the opening quarter. The point-after attempt failed, but David Douglas maintained a 6-0 advantage.

Sandy then was forced to punt after an unsuccessful drive. After the punt, David Douglas quarterback Brent Bishop fumbled the ball, which was

recovered by Pioneer defensive end Matt Vogel at the Scot 30.

Vogel's recovery set up a 13-yard touchdown run by Sandy fullback Rob Barrett with 2:37 to go in the period. After Wheeler booted the extra point, the Pioneers took the lead, 7-6.

Later in the quarter, Bishop again fumbled the ball and, again, Vogel recovered it at the David Douglas 44, giving him two recoveries in less than four minutes of play.

But it was all for naught, as Sandy had to punt the ball on its next drive, which carried over into the second quarter.

David Douglas took advantage of the Pioneer punt and soon afterward scored on a nine-yard run by Ron Gray with 5:21 left in the half. Despite a flubbed two-point conversion try, the Scots regained the lead, 12-7.

Later in the quarter, Sandy surrendered the ball on downs, setting up an 18-yard touchdown pass reception by Bob Gray from Bishop with 1:01 to go in the half. Then David Douglas running back Mike Brewer ran for the two-point conversion, boosting the Scots' lead to 20-7.

With 20 seconds to go in the half, Scot defender Nate Smith picked off a pass attempt by Pioneer quarterback Andy Funderburg, who suffered his 10th interception of the year. Ron

Gray then almost scored again, but he was stopped by a Pioneer defender as time ran out.

The second quarter has proved to be the Pioneers' nemesis this year. In two of their three losses, Sandy's opponents have decided the game with points scored in the second period. In four of their five games thus far, Pioneer opponents have held leads at halftime.

In the second quarter this season, Sandy opponents have outscored the Pioneers 55-3. Over 50 percent of opponents' scoring comes in the second quarter, while Sandy scores 5 percent of its points in the quarter.

In the other three periods, the Pioneers are outscoring their opponents, 36-54.

The Scots went on to score 14 more points, on a 57-yard run by Bishop, Brewer's second two-point conversion and the Gray-to-Gray 35-yard completion, en route to the 34-7 triumph.

"We thought we did a good job of preparing, but we must not have," Funderburg said. "Some people think, 'Well, Sandy's out of it. They're a bunch of losers.' But that's not the case.

"I'm not giving up. The coaches aren't giving up and I hope the kids aren't giving up. We've still got four games to play and we're going to at-



Quarterback Andy Funderburg skitters on a keeper play last Thursday evening in Sandy's 34-7 loss to the Scots.

tack every game like we can still win."

The Pioneers are certainly one of the most beat-up teams in the MHC. Aside from the season-ending leg injury to tailback Darren Buckner, Sandy's injuries include Wheeler's knees, flanker Randy Lamm's ankle, tackle Erik Zimmerman's chest and tight end Tony Hale's back.

But injuries or no, the Pioneers have a game to play Friday and

Funderburg hopes fate favors the frustrated.

"It's a must game Friday night if we're going to salvage a season," he said. "It's been a tough season for us. We had high expectations. We're starting to get some criticism from our coaching and it's maybe justifiable, I don't know. But it's still the kid's team and there's a lot of seniors out there. They've got to put it together."

Girls soccer team suffers setbacks

Team scoreless in efforts against Reynolds, Barlow

by DAVE MAGNUSON
Staff writer

It's been a rough week for the Sandy Pioneers girls soccer team — it was shut out in two Mount Hood Conference matches in the past seven days.

With the losses to the Barlow Bruins Tuesday and the Reynolds Lancers last Thursday, Sandy's record dipped to 1-2-1 in the MHC and 5-4-3 overall.

At Mt. Hood Community College Tuesday night, the state's No. 2 ranked Bruins pounced on the Pioneers with full-force, taking a 6-0 lead at halftime.

Sandy had several opportunities in the second half and held Barlow to a lower level of production.

Early in the second half, sophomore forward Erin Burke rifled a shot-on-goal, which was caught by the Bruin goalkeeper.

Later, Barlow scored its seventh goal, an unassisted shot that came after Sandy appeared to have had control. But the Bruin midfielder stole it away and booted it past sophomore goalie Tracy Telford.

About 10 minutes into the second half, sophomore midfielder Amy Sah stole the ball from the Bruin ball-handler, dribbled upfield and almost had a nice shot-on-goal, but the Barlow goalie slid into the ball.

Barlow successfully defended its goal from a few more Sandy runs and scored two additional goals of its own, winning the league match, 9-0.

"I think they're going to be one of the best teams in the league. I mean, they are one of the best," said Robert Karsten, Sandy coach.

"I knew this was a good team. They outplayed us. They were just that much better.

"I'm proud of the way the girls played," Karsten added. "I'm just disappointed we got beaten this badly."

He said that the Pioneers played better in the second half than in the first half. Karsten altered the Pioneers' playing style to better defend against the Bruins' attempts.

"The whole team turned around and hustled," Karsten said. "I can't really single out that there was anybody who outshone any of the others because there was a major change in the play.

"I don't see that we're going to be beaten like this again."

Against Reynolds last Thursday in Sandy, the Lancers also got out to a lead early on, 2-0 at halftime.

About 10 minutes into the second half, Reynolds' offensive footwork lured Sandy goalie Telford away from the goal and the ball meandered into the goal, giving the Lancers a 3-0 lead.

Later, on a Reynolds corner kick, Telford deflected the ball, but it bounced into the goal for the Lancers' fourth score.

Reynolds held on to win, 4-0.

"We were afraid of their name," Karsten said. "I think that we played even ball with them. It's just that we shied away."

Next for the Pioneers is a home match against Centennial Thursday afternoon. The Eagles are the No. 7 ranked team in the state, but Karsten is not intimidated.

"I watched them play Reynolds and their play is not that much better than ours," he said.



Sandy midfielder Denise Toyooka controls the ball in last Thursday's Mount Hood Conference match against Reynolds.

Boys team loses in tight match to Barlow

It was nip-and-tuck for the Sandy Pioneers boys soccer team Tuesday afternoon, as it played tough throughout the 80 minutes of action but went down to defeat against the Barlow Bruins.

The Bruins edged out a 1-0 victory in the Mount Hood Conference competition.

The Pioneers showed some excellent plays, while maintaining their composure and limiting the Bruins' passing attack.

Numerous players had a moment in the spotlight as Sandy displayed perhaps the finest defense of the season in the first half.

Senior goalkeeper Roger Edwards made a sweet stop early in the half, diving to prevent the ball from getting past him. Then senior defenseman Matt Taylor quickly launched the ball away from the Bruin forwards, buying Edwards some time to reestablish his position.

Sandy and Barlow each controlled the ball equally in the first half, but the Pioneers had

the dominant edge.

Highlights of the opening half included an indirect kick play in which senior midfielder Bill Fisher passed the ball to junior midfielder Sean Reynolds, who tried the shot, but the ball rolled into the Bruin goalie's hands.

Later, Reynolds passed the ball from long range to senior forward Steve McMahon, who then kicked the ball short-range. Again the ball found its way into the Barlow keeper's hands.

Neither team could find the hole in the first half, playing 40 minutes of scoreless soccer.

Barlow managed to score quickly in the second half, but the goal was nullified due to a penalty on a Bruin player.

Approximately six minutes into the final half, a Barlow midfielder drilled a shot from the top corner of the penalty area and the ball sailed into the goal for the match's only score.

Sandy had several opportunities in the second half to tie but was unable to get additional goals, despite nice attempts by Reynolds, senior midfielder Mike Beck and junior forward Tony Stadstad.

The Bruins outlasted Sandy and won the match, 1-0.

"We're real vulnerable in the first of halves and the last of halves. We showed our vulnerability there (when Barlow scored)," said Lon Welsh, Pioneer coach. "I thought we came back real well after that, put a little pressure on them. We just couldn't put anything into the hole."

The loss dropped the Pioneers' record to 4-5-1 overall and 1-3 in MHC action. Their next match is a Thursday road contest at Centennial.

Against Reynolds last Thursday at Mt. Hood Community College, the Lancers played tough and managed a 2-0 triumph.

All scoring was done in the second half, once again. Just 10 minutes into the last half, the Lancers bloomed a shot over Ed-

wards' hands and took the 1-0 lead.

Reynolds dominated control throughout most of the game. Much of the action was set on the Sandy side of the field, which hindered the Pioneers' rhythm.

"We had our offense down playing defense most of the game," Welsh said. "Subsequently, it was really hard for us to make any offensive stabs at them."

Back-to-back shutouts are difficult for most teams to swallow, but Welsh said his players should be pleased with the way they have played.

"I've been real proud of the way these kids have responded to these obstacles that we have had in front of us," he said. "My assumption is that we're going to do well."

"We're going to grit our teeth, set our jaw and come up to the challenges that are ahead of us. I told the kids that they need to be proud of who they were and where they're from, because there's nothing to be ashamed of."

Spikers get ready for Gresham

Instead of playing a Mount Hood Conference volleyball match Tuesday evening, the Sandy Pioneers participated in an intrasquad tournament.

The tournament was made up of players from the varsity, junior varsity and freshman teams at Sandy High School. And although the tournament does not count in the league standings, it doubtlessly lifted the spirits of the players.

It was the second bye of the season for the Pioneers. While the other MHC teams were playing each other in head-to-head matches, Sandy was practicing in a fun way.

And the Pioneers were hoping to enhance the positive attitude the players gained after defeating the David Douglas Scots last Thursday, 15-11, 15-9.

Against the Scots, Sandy managed to clear 43 of 49 serves, which equates to 88 percent prosperity in an area that has impeded Sandy's performance during the first half of the season.

David Douglas got out to an 8-1 lead before Kate Clift and Renae Aschoff served Sandy's way to a 9-8 lead. After the Scots tied the first game at 9-9, sisters Melissa and Tanya Schwartz served the game's six points to David Douglas' two, winning the opening set.

Then in the second game, Aschoff again helped pull Sandy out of a jam, earning six service points in a row, followed by sophomore Sandy Edgren's three service points and Melissa Schwartz's game point on the final serve.

The win boosted not only the Pioneers' record to 3-6, but also the players' morale, said Warren Johnson, Sandy's coach.

"We showed some good hustle out on the floor and that's always the key," Johnson said. "If you're willing to fight for the win, then, I think, you're playing to your potential. It's that desire to play well that causes a volleyball player to play well."

Winning's very exciting and we take a lot of pride in those wins," Johnson said. "What I like about it is that it's like the icing on the cake. If you win or lose, it's not as important as playing to your full potential. If you played excellent ball, the best you could, and lost, you'd like to come away with a win, but there's definitely some satisfaction there."

Sandy's by on Tuesday night allowed it to prepare for the No. 3 ranked Gresham Gophers Thursday night at Gresham. Beating the Gophers will require a minimum of mistakes, but it is not an impossibility, the first-year coach said.

As for the Pioneers, Johnson said the time has come to put their seven defeats behind them.

"We've been dealt our blows and I think they're looking ahead with a positive attitude," he said. "We've got some winning to do. Yet we've got some team goals and some individual goals that we're looking at, too. Those are some measures of our success."

"We, as a team, are starting to function as a team. We're learning to support each other on and off the court and it'll be exciting to see what kind of things come from that," he added. "I think things are pretty positive."