

After narrow defeat, Pioneers face Barlow

by DAVE MAGNUSON
Staff writer

A frustrated Sandy Pioneers football team will end its long, trudging season Friday night in a familiar spot: Sandy's W.E. "Pop" Rannow Stadium.

The Pioneers, 2-6 this season, will play host to the 7-1 Barlow Bruins in the final week of Mount Hood Conference regular-season games.

Sandy could play the role of spoiler in the game, since, with a win, Barlow could become co-MHC champions with the Central Catholic Rams.

The Rams already have claimed a better draw in the OSAA-U.S. Bank state championship tournament, due to an earlier win over Barlow this season.

The Bruins have just come off a heart-chilling 27-26 double-overtime win over Gresham and could be overlooking the Pioneers, thinking of the playoffs.

"Well, I hope they're thinking that," said Sandy coach Mike Funderburg, who will end his tenure as the Pioneers' coach Friday night. "We caught them in a situation like that a couple years ago."

Funderburg promised that Sandy has some tricks up its sleeve, as it had in 1985 when the Pioneers came from behind to snuff Barlow 14-13 in the MHC's biggest upset of that year.

The situations this year are not dissimilar to 1985: The game is in Sandy — as it was in 1985; Sandy is mathematically eliminated from playoff contention — as it was in 1985; Barlow needs a win to be co-champions of league — as it did in 1985.

It could be business as usual for the Bruins, which may give Sandy an

edge.

"The kids are kind of playing survival right now," Funderburg said. "I think we've got to go out and have some fun in the last game of the season."

"We have a goal of playing the type of game we played two years ago."

Sandy will take a four-game losing streak into the season finale, including a loss at Centennial Friday night.

It was the battle of the toe against the Centennial Eagles in the MHC contest. Centennial's Mike Momper and Sandy's Randy Wheeler are perhaps the league's two best kickers and each had a fourth-quarter chance to demonstrate his prowess.

Unfortunately for Wheeler and the Pioneers, Momper, who owns national recognition for field-goal kicking, found the space between the uprights and the Eagles held on to a 3-0 win.

At the end of the third quarter, Sandy was at the Eagle 24 following a four-play drive of 29 yards.

Then, on third down-and-6 at the beginning of the fourth period, Pioneer quarterback Andy Funderburg ran four yards on a keeper play, two yards short of the first down.

Coach Funderburg then called upon Wheeler's kicking talents, and the 6-foot-4 Wheeler made a 37-yard field goal attempt.

The ball was snapped, placed and Wheeler attempted the kick. But the ball was blocked by a Centennial lineman. The ball then was returned by Eagle Tim Burke to the Pioneer 42.

The Eagles did not get far on their next drive, as Centennial backup quarterback Lance Boyce fumbled the ball to Sandy defensive end Tony Hale at the Sandy 38.



Running back Adam Cannon finds himself in the midst of three Centennial defensive players.

On their drive following the recovery, the Pioneers were whistled for a holding penalty. After a first down could not be generated, Sandy had to punt.

The ball was received at the Eagle 25-yard line by Centennial's Marty Bartholomew, who then broke away and returned the ball to the Pioneer 38.

The Eagles then ran six plays for 13

yards, finding themselves in a fourth-and-8 spot with 6:20 remaining. Centennial coach Chris Knudsen then replicated Funderburg by calling on his field goal kicker, Momper.

The week before, Momper had set a state record and tied a national record for most field goals in one game: five. So it was evident that he had the talent to make field goals. But did he have the distance needed

to make a 48-yarder?

He did indeed. Momper not only made the 42 yards, he cleared it by about two yards. Following the game, Knudsen said Momper had been kicking in the 44-yard range consistently in practice.

Sandy had one more opportunity in the game, but was too far in its own territory to create any damage.

Sandy amassed more yards than

Centennial, 145-108. The Eagles also had seven turnovers while Sandy had four.

But the placement of the turnovers was the problem for Sandy. None of the Eagle miscues were in Centennial territory and the Pioneers had a problem moving the ball upfield at crucial times and could not take advantage of their blessings.

Spikers suffer loss to Central Catholic

by DAVE MAGNUSON
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PORTLAND — The Sandy Pioneers volleyball team continued its bad luck with playoff-bound teams Tuesday night.

The Pioneers lost to the district playoff-bound Central Catholic Rams in Mount Hood Conference volleyball action, 15-7 and 16-14, at Central Catholic High School's Pine Street Palace.

With the loss, the Pioneers are 0-8 against playoff teams this year.

It's no shame to be twice defeated by Barlow or Gresham, the league's pride and joy and the finalists in the state tournament last year. But to be twice defeated by Reynolds and Central Catholic is a frustrating thing for Warren Johnson, the Pioneers' coach.

"You can only do what you can do and I think we did some real good things out there," Johnson said. But, just because his Sandy team dropped to 5-10 in MHC play Tuesday, Johnson has not lost his sense of humor.

"I think there were a couple of times where we pretty much played to 95 percent of our potential," Johnson said, adding a laugh.

Sandy fought back in both games, especially the second, but could not claim a victory.

In the first game, the teams exchanged services four times while Central Catholic took a 3-0 lead.

Despite a spike by Sandy's Renae Aschoff, which gave the Pioneers their first point, the Rams then pulled out to a 7-1 lead.



Michelle Buckner dives for the ball while teammate Pixie Meier looks on.

Then, with Aschoff serving, the Rams hit a flat-footed return too far and Pioneer hitter Tanya Schwartz spiked the ball, helping to pull Sandy within striking distance, 7-3.

During two service exchanges following, Central Catholic made a couple of errors but maintained a 7-5 lead.

Soon after, the Rams scored four points through two servers, regaining their six-point lead, 11-5.

Neither team could manage back-to-back points until a Sandy spike landed out of bounds and the Rams' Kristin Abelsen stuffed a premature Sandy return for Central Catholic's 14th and 15th points.

The second game was played in spurts. Sandy got out to a 3-0 lead, which included an Aschoff spike that landed just inbounds for the Pioneers' third point.

After several service exchanges, the Rams pulled to 3-2. Schwartz then served an ace, as Sandy held a 4-2 lead.

The Rams quickly tied up the game 4-4 on one Sandy miscue and a potent spike by Central Catholic's Karin Jacobs.

Soon after, the Rams took a brief 5-4 lead before Sandy again tied it up and went ahead 6-5 on a four-hit call against Central Catholic.

The Pioneers then surrendered the serve and, as quickly as they lost it, they got it back and took advantage of four straight Ram errors, pulling out to a 10-5 lead.

Then a debatable illegal-set violation was charged to Sandy's Ali Lake and the Pioneers had to give up serving rights.

The Rams took advantage of their service rights, scoring six straight points, three of which were on kills by Abelson, two on aces and one on a ball that proved unreturnable by the Sandy defense, giving Central Catholic an 11-10 lead.

The string was snapped on a nice diving effort by Sandy's Pixie Meier, whose low hit on the save was boosted over the net with the quick right hand of Lake.

But soon after, the Rams pulled out to a 13-10 lead.

Then Pioneer sophomore Sandy Edgren served two straight aces before forcing Central Catholic to call a time-out. Following the time-out, a Ram spike seemingly never came down and the Pioneers evened it up at 13-13.

The game was again tied at 14-14. Two service exchanges followed.

Then a pair of Pioneer returns dropped out-of-bounds without Ram players touching them and Central Catholic snagged the 16-14 win.

"It's always hard to see victory so close and then let it go like that," Johnson said.

Sandy was triumphant last Thursday in the last home match of the year, defeating the Parkrose Broncos 15-9 and 15-11.

Girls soccer team denied a chance to play last game

After compiling a 5-6-4 overall record this season, the Sandy girl soccer players were disappointed that they could not play their final match of the year.

The Pioneers' season-ending contest against Columbia was canceled by Mount Hood Conference officials because, regardless of which team won the match, it would not change playoff contenders. So it was decided that the game did not need to be made up.

The match originally was scheduled to be played on Oct. 27 but was postponed because the two teams were at separate locations at the same time.

It was rescheduled, but league officials determined it should be a forfeit on Columbia. Then they decided it should be a forfeit on Sandy. They finally decided it would be a no-decision, canceled match.

Sandy coach Robert Karsten was upset with the logic of the situation.

"It stole the senior girls' last game," Karsten said. "The whole team was going to be changed around to fit the senior girls with a new plan. It was just going to be a fun game."

Had the Pioneers won, they would have had six points in league play and would have finished fifth in the MHC. With the non-decision, Sandy finished tied for seventh with a 1-4-2 league record.

"It's not that I needed the win," Karsten said. "It's the fact that the

girls needed to play."

Karsten realizes the season is over, like it or not. He said he wishes the team could have made the playoffs but was satisfied with what he saw.

"If we wouldn't have been so on and off on certain days, I think we could have been in the playoffs," he said.

The team was plagued by slumps during the season. But the team's highlight was a 1-0 triumph over the Gresham Gophers on Oct. 6. It was the first time in the Pioneers' history that they had beaten Gresham.

Karsten said he liked the play of second-team all-MHC players Denise Toyooka and Suzee Adkins and MHC honorable mention players Jami Brittle, Erin Burke and Tamara Gunderson.

On the junior varsity level, Karsten was impressed with the performances of sophomores Julie McCann and Kristi Kadunc and freshmen Renee Langley and Trisha Waibel. The JV team was coached by Laura Moyer.

Karsten said the players on the JV team "didn't try as hard as the varsity, which scares me." But he then reassured himself.

"The varsity is a battlefield and the JV is more like a playing field," he said. "(On JV) you're able to say 'Oops, sorry.' On varsity, they get hurt and it's part of the game."

Karsten loses five players from next year's team.

Blue Marlins swim club competes at Tualatin Hills

The Blue Marlins Aquatic Club has opened its fall season and competed Oct. 24-25 in the Tualatin Hills A-B meet, a meet that has no placement of finishers and, therefore, no scoring.

There were four new "B" times in the meet, however. A "B" time is a predetermined time that swimmers try to beat. An "A" time is a slightly tougher predetermined time.

In the 8-and-younger girls 25-yard freestyle, Nicole Kilander earned a "B" time with a clocking of 22.59 seconds.

Tammy White earned a "B" time in the 11-12 girls 100 freestyle, finishing in 1 minute, 7.52 seconds.

In the 9-10 boys 100 backstroke, Blake Smith earned a "B" time with 1:35.75.

Jeff Markle of the 11-12 boys 100 individual medley finished in

1:18.58 for the fourth "B" time on the team.

None of the BMAC swimmers earned an "A" time, but the season is still young. Of the 89 events that BMAC swimmers took part in, 47 produced personal-best times.

In the previous week, the BMAC held a Swim-A-Thon at the Sandy Aquatic Center.

The top money collectors for the team were Monique Sellers (\$316), Michelle Crane (\$202.50), Nicole Nippart (\$186) and Nikki Hanson (\$181.50).

The fastest swimmers doing 200 lengths were, by age category: 10-11, Sarah Drill, 1:24:51; 11-12, Adam Hayball, 1:08:42; 13-14, Derek Spires, 1:08:31; and 15-and-older, Crane, 1:10:04.

The club is saving money to purchase an electronic timing system for the aquatic center.

Girls just miss chance at state meet

It was a matter of just one point for the Sandy Pioneers girls team last Wednesday at the Mount Hood Conference district cross country meet.

At the District 3 meet at Blue Lake Park in Fairview, Sandy missed going to the state championship meet by one point.

The good news was that a Sandy runner got to go to the state meet as an individual.

Pioneer senior Kris Kruger led her team and finished in seventh place overall — the last state qualifying spot — with a time of 11 minutes, 52 seconds over a 3,000-meter course.

But even Kruger had a difficult time qualifying and was almost placed in the eighth position by official scorers following confusion over a mishap at the district meet.

A runner in the meet collapsed and was helped back into the race by a spectator. Physical assistance is not allowed in cross country rules, and the order of the finish was changed.

To clear up the misunderstanding, a conference between the league's athletic directors was held last Thursday. They then determined

that Kruger finished seventh and not eighth.

Kruger will compete in the state meet Saturday at Lane Community College in Eugene.

Following Kruger through the finish line for the Sandy girls was senior Danielle Jordan in 14th place, with sophomore Gayle More in 19th place overall.

Rounding out the Pioneer scoring runners were junior Kim Yankauskas in 21st and sophomore Shawnee Summer in 29th.

Leading all individuals in the girls meet was Columbia's Katrina Wright, who finished in 11:34.27.

The Reynolds Lancers and Barlow Bruins are the two qualifiers to state. Reynolds scored 71, while Barlow nudged past the Pioneers by one point for second place with 89 points.

In boys action, the Pioneers finished eighth overall, but their leading runner was unable to finish the race.

Sophomore Toby Chapman was running in the sixth position, which would have placed him in the state meet individually, when a groin pull forced him to pull out of the race.

Sandy coach Darold Beymer said, without Chapman, his team is not as strong.

"I wasn't sure we could beat anyone with our top man out of the lineup," he said. "But the guys were high and they all ran well."

The only boys team Sandy's 213 points would defeat on the afternoon was Reynolds.

Sophomore Jeff Thomson wound up the Pioneers' top finisher, completing the 5,000-meter course in 17:20, 22nd overall.

Excluding the 49th spot, Sandy's remaining scoring runners finished 46th through 51st. They were sophomore Jason Roberti, junior Chris Keyser, sophomore Dustin Bithell, sophomore Ed Ivens and senior Tom Romey.

The boys team was a young one this season.

"My job next year is to move that whole pack into the top of the field," Beymer said. "They are a great bunch of guys."

The Centennial Eagles scored just 40 points, while the Central Catholic Rams scored 79.



Kris Kruger will be the only member of the Sandy cross country team going to the state meet.