

SPORTS

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Astoria wins on Lertora's goal

The Daily Astorian

RAINIER — Out-sized and out-muscled, the Astoria girls soccer team responded with a strong, speedy performance of their own Thursday at Rainier, scoring a 1-0 nonleague season-opening win over the Columbians.

Astoria's Sarah Lertora scored unassisted from 35 yards out in the fifth minute of the game, and the lone goal held up, giving the Lady Fishermen their second win over Rainier in two years.

"Rainier has a bunch of big girls, and we've got a lot of small girls," said Astoria coach Tim Fastabend. "But our girls held their own. It was a very physical, very hot game, and all the girls played well."

Astoria's Claire Albright sparked a strong defensive effort, while Lexis Law was strong in goal for the Lady Fishermen.

"We had good defensive pressure on their shooters, and most of the saves (Law) made were straight-forward stops," Fastabend said. "Our seniors are going to be the core of our physical players, but we've also got a lot more speed this year. Andrea Harris did a good job at the center-back slot; Hayley Kelley, Taileigh Cole, Libby Whitsett ... they all played well."

In other nonleague action Thursday, North Marion defeated Seaside 5-0. No details were reported.

Astoria hosts St. Helens Wednesday at CMH Field.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Columbians sweep Astoria and Seaside

The Daily Astorian

RAINIER — The Rainier volleyball team played host to a couple of North Coast squads Thursday night, as the Columbians took on Astoria and Seaside in a non-league doubleheader.

Behind a dominant blocking performance from Lewis & Clark League Player of the Year Breana Edwards, the Columbians opened with a sweep over Seaside, 25-17, 25-22, 25-13; then took down Astoria in three games, 25-16, 25-15, 25-12.

The losses were the first of the season for both the Gulls and the Fishermen.

Edwards had a combined 19 kills with 11 blocks in the two matches.

Watch Astoria High football games online

The Daily Astorian

Astoria football fans will have access to all varsity football games this season, via Dane Gouge's Astoria Ford website, astoriaford.com

Follow the link to the Astoria High football webcast to view the YouTube telecast.

This is the third consecutive year Astoria Ford is the title sponsor of this program. The Fishermen open their season tonight at North Bend, with kickoff scheduled for 6 p.m.

SCOREBOARD

PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE

TODAY

Football — Astoria at North Bend, 6 p.m.; Seaside at Newport, 7 p.m.; Warrenton at Knappa, 7 p.m.; Nestucca at Ilwaco, 7 p.m.; Wahkiakum at Naselle, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY

Cross Country — Ultimook Invitational, 8:15 a.m.



Gary Henley/The Daily Astorian

A familiar sight in Thursday's soccer game — the ball in the net, the Corbett goalie on the ground, and Astoria's Trevor Byrd turning upfield to celebrate another goal.

Hat trick for Byrd in win over Cardinals

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Early starts for home games under the sun at Volunteer Field ... the Astoria boys soccer team should schedule a few more of those.

As it is, the remainder of their home contests will be late starts under the lights at CMH Field.

In the meantime, the Fishermen played the only high school game this fall at Volunteer Field, where Astoria cruised past the Corbett Cardinals, 6-1, in a nonleague boys game.

Trevor Byrd was all Astoria needed in the 2017 season opener. The senior was definitely much more than the Cards could handle, as Byrd scored three goals — all in the first half — helping the Fishermen start the season on a winning note.

Both teams provided some fireworks over the first four minutes.

Astoria senior Gustavo Velazquez gained control of a ball near midfield along the right sideline, and dribbled through a pair of Corbett defenders all the way into the penalty area, scoring from close range into the lower right corner of the net.

The Cardinals answered just one minute later, scoring on a close range shot past Astoria goalie Jake Hurd.

But that's all the senior keeper would



Astoria's Christian Medina-Perez, left, and Gustavo Velazquez, No. 15, team up on a Corbett player in Thursday's victory at Volunteer Field.

allow, as the Fishermen defense shut down the Cards for the remainder of the first half.

"Other than that one goal, Jake had a good night," said Astoria coach Lee Cain. "And the guys on the back line were solid all night, and played very well."

Meanwhile, Byrd went to work in the 20th minute of the first half.

Seconds after an illegal throw-in by Corbett, Byrd gathered in a ball near midfield and

worked his way in and around the Cardinal defense for an unassisted, breakaway goal.

And that set the tone for three more Astoria goals over the next 14 minutes.

All three were of the "slam dunk" variety — breakaway, close range goals — two for Byrd, one from Cole Beeson.

"That's what we're working on," Cain said. "Trevor and Cole were both solid, and Gustavo worked very hard."

Early in the 25th minute, Beeson took a short pass from Byrd on a break, and scored into an open net.

Nine minutes later, Velazquez assisted Byrd for a 4-0 lead; and with just over three minutes left in the first half, Byrd took another pass from Beeson, made his way up the center of the field and beat the keeper for his third goal.

The Fishermen toned it down in the second half, taking just one shot on goal through 27 minutes. And it happened to be a good shot, as Aldo Cruz worked his way in from the left sideline and scored from very close range, after the beating the Corbett keeper and scoring unassisted.

Corbett had six corner kick opportunities and seven shots on goal in the second half, with Hurd making four saves to keep the Cards scoreless over the final 40 minutes.

In other nonleague action Thursday, Seaside defeated North Marion, 2-1. No details were reported.

Russell Wilson makes Seahawks leaders in NFC West

By JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — One look at the quarterback situations in the NFC West tells you just about everything you need to know about the hierarchy in the division.

While Arizona, Los Angeles and San Francisco all face major questions at the position, the Seattle Seahawks have Russell Wilson.

Even though they still have a suspect offensive line and questions in the running game, the combination of Wilson and a fearsome defense makes Seattle the favorites for a fourth division title in the past five years.

Wilson has had to shoulder a bigger load of the offense of late, no longer able to take a back seat to Marshawn Lynch and the running game. He threw for a career-high 4,219 yards last season — more than 1,000 yards above what he did as a rookie — despite being pressure on more than one-third of his dropbacks, according to Football Outsiders. Only Buffalo's Tyrod Taylor faced more pressure among regular starters last season.

The biggest challenger to Seattle will be the Cardinals, who hope to bounce back from a 7-8-1 season and get back into playoff contention. Arizona hopes 37-year-old Carson Palmer can turn back the clock and



AP Photo/Jae C. Hong

Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson (3) looks for a receiver against the Los Angeles Chargers.

help the Cardinals make a last run in a closing window of opportunity.

Palmer threw 11 fewer touchdown passes last season than he did in a career year in 2015, and had five more interceptions. He improved late in the season after being given Wednesdays off from practice to keep his aging arm fresh, and that move could pay dividends again.

While Palmer has proven capable of leading a team to success, the situations in Los Angeles and San Francisco are more precarious.

The early returns on Jared Goff

weren't good as the No. 1 overall pick last year couldn't even beat out Case Keenum for the starting job. He then showed why he began his career as a backup when Goff finally got his chance late in the season. The Rams hired an offensive mastermind as coach and hope Sean McVay's presence will help Goff develop into a legitimate NFL passer.

The 49ers also hired a top offensive coordinator to run the show, Kyle Shanahan. He reunited with Brian Hoyer, who played in Cleveland when Shanahan was offensive coordinator, but few believe the journeyman is more than a bridge to the arrival of a franchise quarterback, possibly as soon as next offseason.

POROUS PROTECTION: The offensive line was a major problem last season for Seattle and could be again after starting left tackle George Fant went down with a season-ending knee injury in the preseason.

Eddie Lacy was brought in to boost the running game, but must prove he can stay in shape, or a healthy Thomas Rawls could take his carries.

The defense should be back at its elite level with safety Earl Thomas healthy after missing the final six games with a broken leg, and Richard Sherman healed from a nagging knee injury. Linebacker Bobby Wagner is among the NFL's best.

Davis' late TD rallies Seahawks past Raiders

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Seattle quarterback Austin Davis threw a 16-yard touchdown pass to Kenny Lawler with 1:10 remaining in the fourth quarter, and Seattle beat the Oakland Raiders 17-13 in a preseason game Thursday night.

Seattle finished 4-0 in the preseason; the Raiders went winless for only the third time in franchise history.

As expected, the game was basically a matchup of backups.

Seattle sat out 18 starters, including Pro Bowl defensive ends Michael Bennett and Cliff Avril, Wilson, and cornerback Richard Sherman.

Wide receiver Jermaine Kearse was also notably absent in what may have been his final game with the Seahawks after rumors earlier this week Seattle is attempting to trade the veteran.