

CG boys soccer player suffers gruesome injury against Elmira

By NICK SNYDER
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In the Lions second game of the week, they continued their winning ways defeating Elmira (2-3, 0-1) 4-0, however the story of the game was a devastating injury to junior forward Shambay Gabriel Tripp, who is also a member of the basketball team.

Mid-way through the second half, Tripp elevated for a ball, but upon landing suffered a complete fracture of both the tibia and fibula in his lower right leg, as well as a dislocated ankle.

"It was a non-contact injury. He just basically went up for a normal header, but then he came straight down and, being artificial turf, it doesn't give when you land," said coach Vern Stewart, who was also quick to point out the fact that no one on either team was at fault. It was simply the kind of unfortunate freak accident that is bound to happen, albeit rarely, in in all manner of sports.

"[Elmira head coach] Ryan Chambers and I both looked at each other and we both said, 'did we just hear what we thought we heard?' because you could hear the crack of the break when he came down. We both instantly ran out, we didn't even wait for the official to call us on the field," Stewart continued.

Stewart had the foresight to throw his jacket over the gruesome injury to limit the other young players' exposure to such a grotesque sight. Nonetheless, a few players in the vicinity became queasy and Stewart himself, despite his decades of experience, was still shaken by the weight of the situation.

"It was 22 minutes and 39 seconds left in the game. That

will be etched in my brain forever."

At the time of the injury, the Lions held a 3-0 lead and almost three-quarters of the game was already in the books. Elmira gave Cottage Grove the option of ending the game early due to the traumatic nature of what happened, but the Lions decided to finish the game in Tripp's honor, with a final goal by senior Shane Raum sealing the victory.

An ambulance eventually arrived to the field, stabilizing Tripp's leg and transporting him to the hospital where he underwent successful surgery on Fri., Sept. 27. He is expected to miss the remainder of the soccer season and his availability for basketball season is in doubt.

"It's terrible that it happened and, you know, it depends on what the team does after this point. We'll find out how we are, we'll get together on Monday for our practice and we'll talk about it and dedicate the rest of the year to Shambay."

After edging out their last four opponents by a total score of 21-3, Cottage Grove will look to make it six victories in a row when they travel to Junction City on Thurs., Oct. 3 for their third league match of the season.

Soccer from B1



NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL

Senior forward/midfielder Annie Gibson-Becker takes a shot on goal in the second half against Marshfield.

While the players themselves celebrated the league-opening win, head coach Reed Levings sees several areas for improvement as the team heads into the meat of the league season, with upcoming games against Junction City and Marist Catholic.

"The ball wasn't on our defensive half that much and when it was we didn't make the greatest plays on the ball," said Levings.

"Once again, it's passing. We're forcing it either out of bounds or into their for-

wards and it's, like, 'no, you need to move, find your teammates.'"

Indeed, there were a number of missed opportunities - particularly in the second half - to make the 4-0 final score even more lopsided. Levings believes communication and more confidence in decision-making can combine to make this team a real threat throughout league play.

"We talked about there being a difference between talking and com-

municating, where talking is just noise, but actually communicating with your teammates where you're at, what they need to do. Do you have pressure? Can you hold the ball? Do you need to dribble in space? Am I open out wide? Just being more descriptive with your communication."

The team headed to Elmira (0-3-3, 0-1) for their second game of the week on Thurs., Sept. 26, dominating the match and winning 6-0 for their second consecutive league victory.

Cottage Grove will next match up with Junction City (0-8, 0-2) in a home match on Thurs., Oct. 3 before making the trip up to Eugene on Tues., Oct. 8 to take on rivals and league favorites Marist.

Boys soccer makes it a sweep of the Pirates

Not to be outdone by the girls, the Cottage Grove boys soccer team made the trip to Coos Bay to take on a Marshfield team riding a two-game winning streak.

After going down 0-1 early in the second half, the Lions (5-2 overall, 2-0 league) found their resolve, scoring three quick goals to defeat the Pirates (5-2, 1-1) by a score of 3-1 and secure their fourth consecutive victory, their scoreless 0-2 start to the season now decidedly in the rearview mirror.

"That's just our signature this year. It takes us a half to get going," said head coach Vern Stewart, laughing.

"Fortunately, we don't get too far behind. We still play pretty good defense, so we don't often get behind and have this huge hill to climb. But we were behind in this one, we were down 1-0, and we could've just packed it in and gone home with a loss, but our guys are really finding the will to fight."

And fight they did in the

second half. After subbing in for starter Evan Snauer, junior forward Shambay Gabriel Tripp got the Lions on the board in the 61st minute off of a throw-in, finding the loose ball in the box and finishing.

According to coach Stewart, the team had spent the last week practicing their set pieces, practice that paid off in a big way with not only Tripp's goal, but another just 10 minutes later when sophomore Jayden Cameron sent a corner kick into the box which was headed in by freshman phenom Aldo Rea.

"Nobody could have stopped that, not even a six-foot-plus defender," said Stewart about Rea's go-ahead goal, his fifth in the last three games for the Lions.

The final goal was scored by Cameron, a long strike that went through the hands of the Pirates' freshman goalie, Daniel Garcia, and gave Cottage Grove the insurance they needed to breathe easy over the closing minutes of the game.

The Pirates came in as a top-10 ranked team in OSAA 4A soccer with wins over Astoria, North Bend and, most notably, a 5-1 drubbing of a Tillamook team that beat the Lions 4-0 in their first game of the season. The Lions seem to have come a long way since that opening match and Stewart sees the makings of a truly competitive team coming together.

"I wouldn't say we have any superstar on our team, you know, we have some players that are doing the job in the positions that they're assigned, but I think from the defensive side to working it through the middle, as long as we're all relaxed and our passes are on target and our movement is the way it should be, we're pretty well-rounded."

"I'm looking forward to the rest of the season. I think it's going to be one of those, 'oh, I didn't realize we were that good' kind of thing," said Stewart.

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Published weekly in the Cottage Grove Sentinel and online at cgsentinel.com

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