

BAKER GIRLS SOCCER

Baker falls to Buckaroos

By COREY KIRK

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The Baker girls soccer team struggled to get to the ball first and it was reflected

in the score as the Bulldogs fell 10-2 to the Pendleton/Weston-McEwen Buckaroos on Tuesday afternoon, Aug. 31, at the Baker Sports Complex.

Baker assistant coach Christine Teegarden said a focus for Baker, both in practice and in matches, is “to the ball” — encouraging players to control the ball on each possession. That’s a key to maintaining offensive momentum and getting shots on goal.

“When they get the ball, you see them stitch together passes, and do the right thing with it, so we are working on those things in practice, and we know that they are capable of it,” Teegarden said. “But if they aren’t first to the ball, then they can’t show what they can do.”

Pendleton/Weston-McEwen excelled in that phase of the game, and their aggressive play helped the Buckaroos score the first seven goals, all in the first half.

In the closing minutes of the half, Baker junior forward Sydnee Pierce dribbled past defenders and found the back of the net to get the Bulldogs on the scoreboard.

Teegarden said Pierce’s goal exemplified what the

Baker coaches are trying to teach.

“It’s literally what we have been working on, so when I see it in the game it makes me happy,” Teegarden said. “I was thrilled right before the first half and throughout the second half to see their passes, they were intentional rather than booting it up the field, that’s like a golden sign in the right direction.”

Although Baker trailed 7-1 at halftime, head coach Eric Layton continued to encourage the Bulldogs, saying that the score didn’t reflect the effort they were showing.

“Calling out those specific things that they weren’t getting first to the ball, and how that can change the game,” Teegarden said. “You can play better than that, and the score will reflect when you do.”

Pendleton/Weston-McEwen senior forward Reilly Lovercheck scored her fifth goal in the second half and the Buckaroos led 10-1.

Baker junior forward Brooklyn Jaca scored in the



Corey Kirk/Baker City Herald

Baker freshman Jillian Poe, left, battles Pendleton/Weston-McEwen's Miranda Medrano for the ball during a match Tuesday, Aug. 31, at the Baker Sports Complex.

15th minute, but the match was called at the 35th minute.

Teegarden was pleased with Baker’s improved play in the second half.

“We literally had two halves, back to back where changes were made and you saw it,” she said. “The fact that they were able to see and feel the difference for

those few things in the first half and the second half, that’s what I want them to take with. You’re the same team, you are more tired now, and yet you are performing better.”

Baker, which fell to 0-3 on the season, travels to Ontario today, Sept. 2, to take on the Four Rivers Falcons at 4 p.m. PDT.



Corey Kirk/Baker City Herald

Baker’s Sydnee Pierce dribbles past Pendleton/Weston-McEwen’s Madaline Schumacher on her way to Baker’s first goal on Tuesday, Aug. 31 at the Baker Sports Complex.

Celebrate the return of ‘normal’ sports



COREY KIRK

coaches about that opportunity.

Gratitude.

Playing a condensed season format last spring, smiles never left the faces of the players, coaches or the parents who were able to come watch. As this school year returns in more normal fashion, with fall sports underway, I am excited to see the energy reach a pinnacle after what they’ve been through the past two years.

This time last year, teams were able to have noncontact practices, their upcoming season uncertain. The COVID-19 pandemic was a part of everyone’s day-to-day, and skepticism was common on how football was even going to take place when social distancing was necessary.

In the end, fall and winter sports seasons were postponed.

In February 2021, it was announced teams could com-

mit to a shortened season, and energy began to skyrocket at practices. When I talked to coaches, their emphasis wasn’t on wins and losses, but a bigger goal.

They talked about the opportunity to bring players together, create lifelong bonds and eventually leave high school with a positive experience with a game they love.

I recognize that the goal of, say, football is to be better

than the other team, where game-saving tackles can turn the momentum in any team’s favor, and touchdowns will bring fans to their feet.

Whether or not the Oregon School Activities Association decides to sanction playoff tournament format play, and how things will be handled with concerns of the delta variant, this season a newfound perspective will remain a constant.

While the goal is to be the best team in your respective division/conference, what matters most is to enjoy every whistle, every snap, every play, every win and every loss. It was taken away from football players before, and can very well be taken away from them whether by grades, injuries, or in this case, a global pandemic.

Corey Kirk is sports editor for the Baker City Herald.



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