

BAKER GIRLS SOCCER

Baker's upset bid falls just short

By COREY KIRK

ckirk@bakercityherald.com

In front of a drove of parents from Baker and La Grande, the Bulldog girls soccer team went toe to toe with the Tigers in an exciting Greater Oregon League opener Tuesday, Sept. 21 at the Baker Sports Complex.

Baker rallied from a 2-0 deficit to tie the score early in the second half, but La Grande's Maezie Wilcox scored 11 minutes later to give La Grande a 3-2 lead, and the Tigers held on to win by that margin.

"La Grande has historically in our league put up the biggest competition," Baker assistant coach Christine Teegarden said. "In the beginning they (the Bulldogs) were playing pretty conservatively I would say, and as soon as those two points scored they were like, 'no way we are letting this stand.'"

Wilcox and fellow junior Haylee McCall each scored

early in the first half to give La Grande a 2-0 lead.

Baker, playing for the first time in a week, played much more aggressively thereafter, showing some of the skills they worked on during practices over the past week.

Teegarden said the Bulldogs focused on encouraging players to get to loose balls first.

"We just had more time to practice it, we developed a new drill for first to, and having them competitively having to race for first to," Teegarden said. "We changed up some drills a little bit."

It paid off against La Grande.

In the 21st minute, Baker sophomore Skye Smith found the net from nearly 20 yards out.

Baker head coach Eric Layton said Smith is a versatile offensive player, and he encourages her to try longer shots on goal.

"We always encourage them to shoot early — if they

give us that space, it's like why not? Take a crack," Layton said. "Skye has a green light, we can expect a couple of shots from her there every game."

Baker trailed 2-1 at halftime.

Teegarden said coaches extolled the players during intermission to take advantage of the opportunity to upset the Tigers (2-1-1).

"You can win, you could really walk away from this with the win, and that's when the mindset changed," Teegarden said. "The mindset started conservative and then became more aggressive the more they realize they can compete."

Baker certainly did that, and in the 52nd minute, freshman Winter Smith — Skye's sister — beat the La Grande goalkeeper to tie the score at 2.

Teegarden said she remembered that Winter, who's the youngest of three sisters (Maya, a senior; is



Corey Kirk/Baker City Herald

Baker senior Maya Smith dribbles against the defense of La Grande junior Rylie Huddleston on Tuesday, Sept. 21 at the Baker Sports Complex.

the oldest), had a hunch she would get her first goal of the season against the Tigers.

"She said before the game that I have a goal to score this game, then she gets out there and she did it and you saw everyone erupt, everyone was so excited," Teegarden said. "We were ecstatic. It was so good to see that, and I think that also that really amped the team to carry them into a big push."

Baker junior goalkeeper Neah Thomas stopped 12 La Grande shots to keep Baker in the match.

"She's one of the busiest players on our team," Layton said of Thomas. "She's coming a long way towards being more aggressive, just being in the right place."

In the 63rd minute,

Wilcox found the net for the game-winning goal.

Although Baker's upset bid fell just short, Layton said he was pleased with the Bulldogs' effort.

"I'm very proud of them," Layton said.

Baker returns to the Sports Complex on Tuesday, Sept. 28 for a nonleague match against Fruitland, Idaho, at 5 p.m.



Corey Kirk/Baker City Herald

Baker junior goalkeeper Neah Thomas (in orange) defends a La Grande corner kick midway through the first half on Tuesday, Sept. 21, at the Baker Sports Complex.

BAKER BOYS SOCCER

Buckaroos top Baker, 4-2

By COREY KIRK

ckirk@bakercityherald.com

The Pendleton Buckaroos took a 4-1 lead over the Baker boys soccer team and held on for a 4-2 nonleague win on Monday, Sept. 20 at Pendleton.

Pendleton took a 2-0 lead early, but Baker rallied with a goal from junior Diego Quintela to cut the lead in half.

The Buckaroos then scored two goals before Baker junior Diego Jones-Bedolla found the net for the final goal.

Pendleton improved to 2-1 on the season.

Baker fell to 2-4.

"It wasn't our best game," Baker coach Victor Benites said. "I know my players and I know that we can do better. They caught us by surprise with the two goals at the very beginning."

Baker opened league play Wednesday, Sept. 22 at La Grande. Results from the match will be in the Sat-

urday, Sept. 25 issue of the Baker City Herald.

The Bulldogs return to the Baker Sports Complex on Monday, Sept. 27 to play host to Weiser at 4 p.m., the

first of three matches in three days.

Baker travels to Fruitland on Tuesday, Sept. 28, and to Ontario on Wednesday, Sept. 29.

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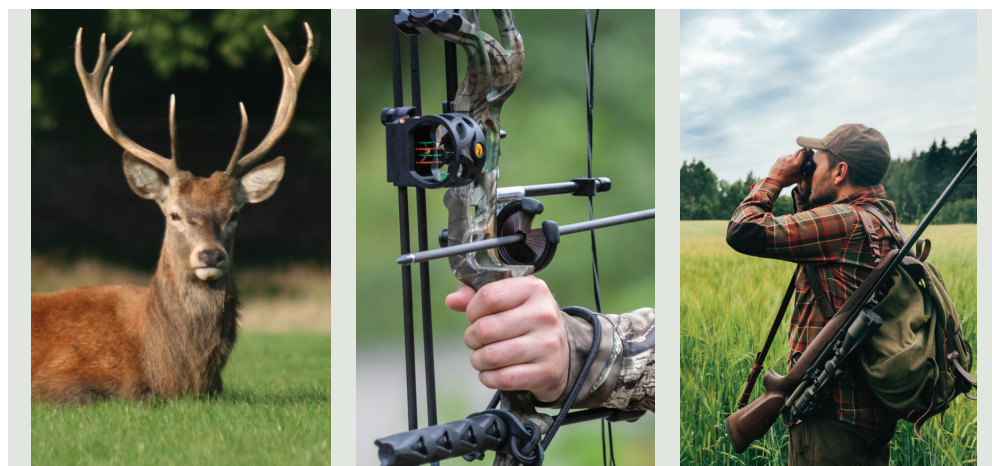
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BAKER VOLLEYBALL

Baker sweeps Ontario in league opener

By COREY KIRK

ckirk@bakercityherald.com

The Baker volleyball team opened Greater Oregon League play Monday, Sept. 20 by sweeping the Ontario Tigers at Ontario.

It was Baker's seventh straight win.

The Bulldogs, 9-2 and ranked fifth in Class 4A in the Oregon School Activities Association standings, won 25-6, 25-13 and 25-9 over Ontario (0-6).

"I was proud of them," Baker coach Ali Abrego said. "We focused on eliminating our errors, gave away too many points in the second set and had a slower start, but were able to pull through and finish strong."

Abrego said Baker played together, with every Bulldog contributing to the win.

"I feel like this game was a collective team effort, as always," Abrego said.

The Bulldogs won't see the court again until next Tuesday, Sept. 28, when they travel to Vale to take on the Vikings (7-8). Tip off is set for 5:30 p.m. PST.

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