

# Herald Sports

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## Hermiston blows out Umatilla in season opener

The Bulldogs didn't hold anything back against Vikings

By ALEXIS MANSANAREZ  
STAFF WRITER

The second game of Hermiston's varsity soccer doubleheader was nothing like the first. But if you ask Bulldogs' head coach Rich Harshberger what he expected after the first few minutes of play, his answer is drastically different than the 8-0 outcome of the boys match.

"The first couple minutes were actually a little cagey," Harshberger said. "I was like, 'OK, this is going to be a little more of a contest than I thought.'"

However, the Bulldogs (1-0) quickly composed themselves and let the goals rain on a hot, windy night.

"We settled into our game and then I thought from about the third minute on we really just played our game," Harshberger said. "I'm pretty pleased with their performance tonight."

Three goals fell in the first 10 minutes of play and Hermiston added three more in the next 30 to keep Umatilla at bay. By the end of the game, five Bulldogs scored to open their season at Kennison Field with a victory.

Senior forward Joel Mendez was the star of the night, scoring three goals — two in the first half and



Hermiston's Joel Mendez drives on Umatilla's Elian Armenta in the Bulldogs' 8-0 win against the Vikings on Thursday in Hermiston.



Hermiston's Rene Alarcon drives on the goal guarded by Umatilla's Christian Alaniz in the Bulldogs' 8-0 win against the Vikings on Thursday in Hermiston.

capping the hat trick in the second. Three more upperclassmen, junior Rene Alarcon and seniors Noe Silva and Mark Mejia, as well as sophomore Oliver Paredes contributed on offense.

If anyone thought losing last season's senior class would slow the Bulldogs down, they were shown otherwise Thursday. Harshberger credits that to the program he has been

dedicated to building over the years.

"We're building a program here now so we can reload," he said. "We're not building singular teams so that when we have that team graduate we're kind of stuck. We're able to bring in guys that are ready to go at the varsity level and we don't need to take another year or two to get them ready."

While Hermiston was firing on all cylinders, nothing went Umatilla's way. The ball was kept in their third nearly the entire night and the few chances the Vikings (0-1) did have ended in shots wide of the goal and turnovers that gave the momentum back to Hermiston.

Despite the impressive shutout performance, the Bulldogs cannot get comfortable now. It was a sentiment Harshberger expressed at the half and the coaches reiterated at the end of the game.

"This was an opportunity for us to get some practice at a competitive level, especially in the second half," Harshberger said. "They've got to come out and they have got to push it because there are going to be teams that we are going to need to go a full 80 (minutes) against."

With a focus on communication, keeping up pace, and owning their own style of play, Hermiston will take to the road.

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STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston's Amanda Nygard splits Umatilla defenders Devina Monreal (17) and Lorena Leon in the Bulldogs' 1-0 win against the Vikings on Thursday in Hermiston.

## Late-game goal gives Bulldogs first win

By ALEXIS MANSANAREZ  
STAFF WRITER

Third time was the charm for the Hermiston girl's soccer team Thursday night at Kennison Field.

After 47 scoreless minutes and more than 20 shots on goal against Umatilla, the Bulldogs (1-0) sealed their season-opening victory on their third consecutive corner kick.

The clock was winding down with the first of the three corners during the final 3 minutes of play. Another followed, and then another. That's when forward MaKayla Pacheco, one of 12 seniors on the team, set the ball down carefully, stepped up, and sent the corner kick flying to the feet of senior forward Hannah Thompson.

Thompson banged in the only goal of the night.

"It's always good to come off your first game with a win," Bulldogs' head coach Danielle MacBride said. "Umatilla is always a battle for us for some reason. We always come out prepared for the most part, and usually we'll be at the top of all the stats and all the shots. We usually end up squeaking away and sure enough that's what happened."

Hermiston maintained control of the ball for nearly the entire game. This kept Umatilla's senior goalkeeper and captain Maria Moreno busy. The Vikings (0-1) would have been in more trouble if it weren't for Moreno's performance,

and they knew it. "It should have been a lot worse," Vikings' head coach Tim Lee admits. "But our girls did a great job keeping it in front of them."

There was no doubt that Moreno did that best of all.

"I love having Maria back there," Lee said. "For four years she has been a starter and her confidence level has increased over time. It's always one of the biggest worries a coach could possibly have: being unsure of the keeper. But really there is no doubt when it comes to Maria. I know what's going to happen."

Moreno fended off six straight shots on goal within 10 minutes.

"You can't really complain too much with a win but there are things here and there that we definitely need have to work on, but it's just a matter of getting comfortable with each other," MacBride said. "There's a lot of new faces and a lot of our freshman are stepping up big for us. We had eight starters graduate last year and we are young."

We are starting three freshman so it's just a matter of getting comfortable with each other and learning the style of play. I think once that happens, we'll be alright — good things will happen with this group."

Contact Alexis Mansanarez at sports@hermistonherald.com or 541-564-4542. Follow her on Twitter at @almansanarez.

### IN BRIEF

#### Umatilla, lone fall to Helix

The Helix Grizzlies got off to a great start in the 2017 volleyball season, as they hosted a dual with lone and Umatilla on Thursday afternoon and earned two three-set victories.

First up against Ione, Helix (2-0) started slower in the first set to win

it 25-19 but then finished strong winning 25-15 and 25-12 to finish off the win. Kailey Mize led Helix with eight kills in the match and Sadie Wilson had seven, while Ari Krol was a perfect 12-12 on serves and Lynne Roberts also had a strong game.

Then against Umatilla, Helix again began the match a little sluggish with a

25-19 win in the first set before finishing off the Vikings 25-10 and 25-7 for the victory. Mize again led the team in kills, this time with 10, and Krol had eight while Charmayne Bennett and Roberts carried the team in serving.

"It's great to get that first win right away," Helix coach Dianna Melton said.

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