

Bulldogs winless in doubleheader

Hermiston's soccer teams have a tough go in last few non-league games

By **ALEXIS MANSANAREZ**
STAFF WRITER

Both the boys and girls soccer teams returned from a very brief road stint to host a doubleheader at Kennison Field on Thursday evening. After defeating its last opponent 12-nil on their home turf, the boys were looking forward to continuing a two-game win streak to end the pre-season. Unfortunately for them, and the girls, they let their opponents get the best of them and fell 2-0 and 8-0, respectively.

Up first were the boys, and the Bulldogs (5-3) had a tough top-5 team to face. Hillsboro entered the match with only four games under its belt, after going 3-1 on the season defeating its opponents by a combined score of 11-3.

Hermiston was able to hold Hillsboro for the first 40 minutes of play, keeping the Spartans' chances to score at a minimum. Half way through the first half, the Bulldogs had a chance to take the early lead and did until the goal from senior Mark Mejia was called back because he was offside.

The Spartans had only eight shots on goal in the first half, but after returning from a scoreless draw they were hungry for a goal. Hillsboro found the net in the 68th minute when a corner kick led to a header off sophomore Gabriel Tena Palomares to put the Spartans up, 1-0.

Ten minutes later, a free kick just near the 30-yard line was unstoppable, sailing over the heads of everyone in the box and Hermiston goalkeeper Juan Navarrete.

After 80 minutes of play, keeping a team of



Hillsboro's caliber to only two goals was significant, especially when the offense just wasn't clicking for Hermiston.

"I am pretty happy with the defensive performance," head coach Rich Harshberger said. "We tried to switch things up and get one back and try to go a little more offensive. We just need to fine tune that a little bit because it wasn't working for us, obviously."

"I don't think there's a lot separating us. We've just got to fine tune the little stuff and we will be right there with them."

The Bulldogs didn't go down with out a fight. They racked up four yellow cards — one in the first half and the rest in the second. After letting quite a few 50/50 balls get by, Hermiston starting putting the pressure on Hillsboro and with a little bit of bad luck, got called for it.

"It's just one of those games that's a learning experience"

Coach MacBride

"I don't have a problem with any of those yellow cards," Harshberger said. "Stupid fouls like mousing off and stuff I'm going to have a problem with but

that's just the boys playing hard and sometimes playing hard gets you a yellow card. We just take it and roll with it."

The boys will certainly roll with the rest of their schedule as they close the book on the preseason and now look to start league play. "We've got to come out and we've got to get it because it's all about league play," Harshberger said. "Preseason helps us in our overall ranking, which helps us going into the postseason, but we've definitely got to come out and get it."

Girls soccer

The girls will have one more non-league game to work out some kinks, and after the 8-nil defeat by Sandy they can definitely use the opportunity.

"I told the girls that games like this have to happen," head coach Danielle MacBride said. "You have to have some where to gauge, and sometimes you just need to get your butt kicked. We battled, but they were a good team."

Sandy made its presence known almost immediately, scoring its first goal within the first two minutes of kickoff. From there, the Pioneers (3-1-1) never looked back. They scored four more goals in the first half, all within 11 minutes of each other, while the Bulldogs (3-4) only had two shots on goal — both coming from over 30 yards from the goal.

As Hermiston struggled with communication and ball control, it finally

caught a break when it was able to reset at the half.

"It's gut-check time, it's mental," MacBride told the girls at the half. "Are they a good team? Absolutely. Do they have girls that will probably play at the next level? Absolutely. But that doesn't mean that we can't do individually what we need to do to win our battles."

"I think they understand that," MacBride said. "I think they were a little surprised."

While the Bulldogs were held to very few looks at the goal in the second half, they did come out a different team.

Hermiston was playing more aggressively, winning the 50/50 balls it gave up in the first half, and successfully moving the ball into Pioneers territory for what seemed like the first time all game. Although the Bulldogs couldn't execute on offense, the defense was stepping up and held Sandy scoreless for nearly 30 minutes.

The battle wore the Bulldogs out, however, and they gave up three more goals in the final 18 minutes. Sandy junior Sophie Burton notched four goals and fellow junior Baylee Groom and senior Natalie Paul score two each.

"It's just one of those games that's a learning experience and, unfortunately, if we started the first half the way we started the second half it'd be a different game," MacBride said.

Even with the adjustments made in the second half, it's a game that just needs to be erased, MacBride said.

"You just move on," she said. "As long as we keep consistent with our game and the things that we do well and individually growing as players. We did a lot of defensive work, it's kind of hard to show in games like this where you have quick players like that but as long as we are playing our game to our strengths throughout the season than I think we will be OK."

PREP ROUNDUP

Volleyball: Stanfield falls to Weston-McEwen at home

WESTON-MCEWEN 3, STANFIELD 0 — At Stanfield, the Weston-McEwen TigerScots rebounded from Tuesday's loss to beat the Stanfield Tigers, 3-0, on Thursday evening.

Weston-McEwen (12-6, 1-1 CBC) won 25-14, 25-10, 25-17 over Stanfield (0-9, 0-2) and played a well-rounded game, said

coach Shawn White. Alyssa Finifrock led the TigerScots with 10 kills and Jesse Manning had eight, while Bryce Thul had 23 assists and six aces and Eli Scheibner had eight digs and eight assists. Emma Olson filled in at the libero position for an absent Chelsea Quae-mpts and had a solid game with seven digs and four aces.

SPORTS BRIEFS

RecTennis holding jamboree in Hermiston

RecTennis is holding a jamboree on Saturday at Armand Larive Middle School for all ages to come enjoy some fun and play some tennis.

The free event from 10

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Isaac Sanchez
Hermiston • Senior - Cross Country Runner

Sanchez ran a new personal best time of 15 minutes, 52 seconds to win first place in the men's cross country race at the Footrace to Valhalla on Friday in Umatilla.

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