



**Going solo**  
A pair of solo homers was enough for the Pirates to beat the Cubs. B2

## Whaley's goal leads Rams over LH

Ringgold defender drilled a free kick to give her team a win in its home opener.

By **DEAN DELLAMALVA JR.**  
*MVI Sports*

The Ringgold girls soccer team dominated play Wednesday in its Section 2-3A game against Laurel Highlands. However, the Rams had to sweat it out to secure victory.

Ringgold (2-2, 2-2) outshot the visiting Mustangs, 25-9, and played 90% of the game in the Laurel Highlands' defensive end, but only managed a 1-0 victory in the Rams' home opener.

Sophomore Abby Whaley broke through in the 52nd minute on a free kick from 35 yards out. The shot went over Mustangs' keeper Jayden Ruvalcaba's outstretched arms and into the back of the net. The tally broke the scoreless tie and ended some frustration for the Rams.

"At halftime we talked about the frustration and explained the importance of playing simple," Rams coach Olivia Wilkerson said. "We were trying to force things instead of letting the flow of the game happen. In the second half we were able to correct that."

In the first half, the Rams outshot Laurel Highlands, 10-2, but could not get many quality or close opportunities. The Ringgold midfield and defense kept putting the ball into the offensive zone and kept the Fillies out of the Rams' back end.

"It is definitely becoming a theme for us, our defense and midfield have worked really well together," Wilkerson said. "There were a couple small issues but they were able to regroup. That just comes from the trust and respect they have for each other."

Laurel Highlands didn't manage their first shot until the 32 minutes in.



Bob Smith / MVI Sports

**Ringgold's Abby Whaley lines up her free kick from 35 yards away during play Wednesday at Joe Montana Stadium. Whaley's kick found the back of the net to give the Rams a 1-0 win over Laurel Highlands.**

One of its best opportunities came on a shot from about 25 yards out but Rams keeper Emily Doleno stopped it. The freshman made nine saves in securing her first career shutout.

The visitors mounted one more final push in the game's final five minutes. Their best late chance came on a free kick from 22 yards out in the 76th minute. The shot was on line, but high and over the goal.

When it mattered, it was the steady and calm play of Whaley on the back line along with Morgan Walsh, Madison Bailey and Elizabeth Wilson that stymied the Mustang attack.

"The midfield and defense were able

to maintain their composure and that was important for us," Wilkerson said. "(Whaley) is a beast, she's so talented. We can all learn from her ability to keep her composure under pressure."

When the Rams had a free kick or needed a long throw-in it was Whaley who took it. And when the opportunity to score arose, Whaley sent the ball home.

"(Whaley) struck the ball like it was her job," Wilkerson said. "I am grateful that she made that one for sure."

Ringgold resumes section play Saturday at Albert Gallatin.

## Jags finally top Oakland Catholic

For the first time in four seasons, the TJ girls beat the Eagles on the pitch.

By **JEREMY TEPPER**  
*MVI Sports*

With 31:10 left in the game, Hannah Henn approached the ball, ready for her penalty kick. With the score tied at 1-1, this was a chance for her Oakland Catholic team to take the lead over Thomas Jefferson.

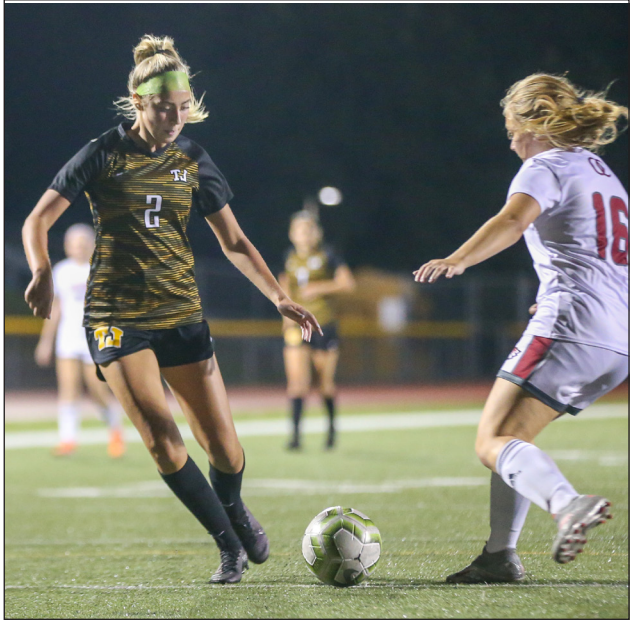
But Jaguars keeper Madison Sippey had other plans.

The senior goalie handled Henn's strike, diving and saving a potential game-winning goal. The momentum shifted and Thomas Jefferson was filled with energy and confidence.

"That's the moment in that game where we knew we could take the reins and we were the team to beat. I think they walked into here and they thought they were the team to beat and we looked at them as the team to beat," Jaguars coach Sean Richter said.

"That's the moment for us that we knew we had to grab it and take it."

Thomas Jefferson didn't



Mike Darnay / MVI Sports

**TJ's Natalie Lamenza (2) breaks down Oakland Catholic defender Kiley McIntyre on her way to the net during Wednesday's game.**

waste its newfound life.

Just over four minutes later, Natalie Lamenza ripped a shot past OC keeper Deryn Bagley for her second goal of the night. It proved to be the difference, as the Jaguars claimed a 2-1 win. It was the first time the Jaguars (3-1, 2-1) beat Oakland Catholic (2-1, 2-1) in three seasons. Before that,

they had lost four straight times.

"We knew if we could come here tonight and do what we want to do against them, we're a contender and we can play," Richter said.

For a young TJ team still finding its way, Wednesday's result served as a huge confidence booster

for Lamenza and her teammates. Lamenza, a freshman, said that she had "big nerves" before the game.

She scored her first goal of the night in the 13th minute to tie the game before eventually adding the one to secure the win. It was her second consecutive two-goal game after getting two Monday against Penn Hills. Lamenza was mostly deferential in describing her goals, giving credit to her teammates for helping create the opportunity.

"My teammates moved the ball around well, especially in the middle, and then we just slotted that ball to the side and I finished it," Lamenza said.

"It's just a lot of pressure starting varsity and being able to score is just a great opportunity. Especially in this game, it meant a lot."

Before the Jaguars found their way, Oakland Catholic got off to a quick start when Henn scored 1:37 into the game. From that point on, Thomas Jefferson was able to limit Henn, a Michigan State recruit. And because of that, the Jaguars were able to shut down the Ea-

JAGUARS • B4

### HIGH SCHOOL ROUNDUP

## Bentworth girls on the prowl, win fourth straight game

By the Mon Valley Independent

Don't look now, but the Bearcats are back on the prowl in Class A girls soccer.

Bentworth won its fourth straight game Wednesday with a hard-fought 2-1 win on the road at Chartiers-Houston in Section 2-A play.

"We controlled the first half and they controlled possession in the second half," Bentworth coach Tyler Hamstra said. "We didn't make it easy on ourselves or play real great, but we found a way to win."

"It's a huge win at Chartiers-Houston. It seems like that's how it is for us playing there."

The Schreiber twins led the way once again for the Bearcats (4-2, 2-2).

Reagan Schreiber scored both goals for Bentworth, and both were assisted by sister Mallory.

"We had a few injuries but we found a way," Hamstra said. "It was important for us to get the result we did on a night we didn't play our best."

The Bearcats are back in action Saturday at home against Beth-Center. Kickoff is set for 10 a.m.

### Seton LaSalle 4, Charleroi 2

The young Cougars gave unbeaten Seton LaSalle all it could handle before succumbing in a Section 2-A contest at Myron Pottios Stadium.

Mikaela Small had a hat trick and Paige Kaisis added the other goal for the Rebels (5-0, 5-0).

The Cougars got on the board on a "Boots" DeUnger header off a nice feed from Bella Carroto. Carroto added a second-half tally for the Cougars' other goal.

"We played right there with

them," Charleroi coach Traci Fleming said. "We moved the ball well and played well on both ends of the field. We didn't capitalize on two easy chances that really hurt us."

"We picked up some momentum after coming out a little lackluster in the second half when Bella scored off a direct kick, but it was a little too late."

Addison Conrad finished with 10 saves in goal for the Cougars.

Charleroi (1-4, 1-3) is back in action Saturday on the road at Monessen at 10 a.m.

### Beth-Center 3, Monessen 2 (OT)

The Bulldogs picked up their first win of the season and kept the Greyhounds winless with an overtime win in Section 2-A.

Monessen goals came from Mya Petruska on a corner kick by Aaliyah Rice and Abby Rhome scored off a nice assist by Maddie Popovich.

The Greyhounds host cross-river rival Charleroi Saturday morning.

### Serra Catholic 9, Ligonier Valley 0

Jaime Dermotta had herself a night, finishing with two goals and assisting on six others as the Eagles trounced visiting Ligonier Valley in Section 1-A play.

Bella Meder, Lindsay Schanck and Maya Poziviak each scored twice and Callie Cunningham added a goal and two assists for the Eagles (1-1-1, 1-1-1).

With the loss, the Rams fall to 0-5 overall and 0-3 in section play.

The Eagles are back in action today on the road at Steel Valley.

RDP • B2



Adam McQuaide / MVI Sports

**From left, Serra Catholic's Callie Cunningham, Lindsay Schanck, Jaime Dermotta and Bella Meder celebrate a goal during a 9-0 win over Ligonier Valley.**

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