

Sassak's hat trick, 3 assists lead Leopards over Mustangs

By JONATHAN GUTH
MVI Sports

Belle Vernon Area jumped out to a three-goal lead in the first half and hung on for a 6-4 victory over Laurel Highlands Monday at the Mustang Corral.

The Leopards improved to 7-0 overall and 6-0 in Section 3-3A play, while LH dropped to 3-3 in section and overall play. Belle Vernon sits two games ahead in the section race.

"It is nice that we control our destiny in the second half, but we beat Trinity, Ringgold and TJ all by a goal," Belle Vernon coach Rob Miele said. "I don't expect the second half to be easy and our guys know that. We are just taking it game-by-game, and hopefully we can keep improving and peak at the right time."

The Lep's Daniel Sassak had a hat trick and three assists,

and now has nine goals this season.

"He (Sassak) has done some really good things this year," Miele said. "Maybe his goal production hasn't been what he wants it to be, but he has done other things that maybe haven't shown up on the stat sheet. He was involved in every goal tonight, and that is a big-time performance from him."

BVA took a 1-0 lead at 27:56 of the first half when the Leopards forced the Mustangs into a turnover in their own zone and Tyler Kovatch buried a shot past LH keeper Thatcher Wilson. Sassak and Nick Nagy touched the ball before Kovatch's tally.

Neither team found the back of the net for the next 23 minutes before Sassak set up Daniel Gordon with 4:22 left for a 2-0 advantage for the Leopards. Sassak scored with 2:24 remaining for a 3-0 lead.

Laurel Highlands cracked the scoreboard just before halftime, scoring on a set piece when Joey Lemansky bent in a corner kick and Harry Radcliffe found the back of the net to cut the deficit to 3-1 with 37 seconds remaining.

The Leopards got the goal back at 32:40 of the second half when Sassak once again set up Gordon for a 4-1 lead. The tally was set up off a corner kick. Belle Vernon had six corner-kick opportunities, while the Mustangs had three.

Belle Vernon thought it had a four-goal advantage when Nagy's shot hit off the crossbar and Sassak buried the deflection, but the tally was waved off.

"They called offside on that play," Miele said.

Laurel Highlands took advantage of the break and got within two with 24:06 remaining on a goal by Manny Olivares. The home team scored

their second straight goal at 16:15 left on Carson Seaman's goal.

Sassak got his second goal of the match, and eighth this year, when he buried a tally with 12:03 remaining for a 5-3 lead. Sassak's third goal came with 9:09 left for a 6-3 advantage.

Matt Lucas scored the home team's fourth goal at 6:28.

"They (LH) have always played us tough," Miele said. "Defensively, I think we're a pretty strong team, but for whatever reason, we always struggle with them. We always find a way to win, but it is always a high-scoring affair, which is not something we like to get into. We can do it if we have to, but it is not the style of play we want. They have some nice players on their team, and I thought their freshman goalkeeper played a nice game, so props to him."



Jeff Helsel / MVI Sports

Daniel Sassak prepares to rip a shot on goal during the Leopards' 6-4 win over Laurel Highlands Monday. The BVA junior had three assists to go with three goals.

EF boys snap losing skid; Yough girls top Charleroi

By the Mon Valley Independent

Elizabeth Forward put an end to a short two-game losing skid with a 4-0 victory in Section 1-2A play Monday.

Four different players scored for the Warriors (5-2, 5-1) in the win. Andrew Smith, Max Salankiewicz, Donovan Woytek and Rob Hrabosky each found the back of the net.

Ethan Bowser added a pair of assists, while Smith and Salankiewicz had helpers as well.

Austin Onofrey made two saves for the shutout. Steel Valley (2-4, 2-4) has lost four straight games.

Serra Catholic 4, St. Joseph 0

Serra Catholic rolled past St. Joseph in Section 2-A play.

The Eagles (2-2, 2-2) picked up their second straight win behind a pair of goals from Joey Folino and one apiece from Nick Almeter and Aaron Spisak.

Serra took a 3-0 lead into halftime after Nick Almeter scored on a rebound off a penalty kick.

Aaron Spisak scored the lone second-half tally on an assist by Jaxson Pozivak.

Serra travels to Jeannette tonight.

Brentwood 6, Bentworth 0

The Bearcats suffered their fourth straight defeat with a shutout loss on the Spartans' home field.

Bentworth (2-4, 2-3) resumes play at home Wednesday against California in a Section 4-A contest.

Girls

Yough 5, Charleroi 2

Yough scored four goals in the first half en route to a non-section win over Charleroi.

McKenzie Pitts scored two goals while Natalie Vilchek, Nicole Veychek and Haley Lauffer each had one for Yough (4-3).

Bella Carroto and Boots DeUnger scored for Charleroi (2-5). Addison Conrad had 15 saves in net.

South Allegheny 1, McKeesport 0

Marlee Andrejchak scored the lone goal in South Allegheny's nonsection win over McKeesport.

Paige Allan had the assist on the goal, while Ava Martorelli shut out the Tigers (1-



Jeff Helsel / MVI Sports

Elizabeth Forward's Andrew Smith had a goal and an assist in the Warriors' 4-0 section win over Steel Valley at Warrior Stadium.

1) with five saves in net for SA (5-2).

Golf Boys

Uniontown 204, Charleroi 253

Adena Rugola shot a 38 and three players finished with 41

to lead the Red Raiders over the Cougars in nonsection golf action at Uniontown Country Club.

Shooting 41 for Uniontown was Gage Brugger, Michel Mercandank and Logan Voytish.

Leading the Cougars was Colton Polandner with a 47 and Nick Summers with a 49.

Serra Catholic 221, S. Allegheny 289

The Eagles earned a lopsided win over South Allegheny thanks to the play of Christian Galiardi.

Galiardi shot a team-best 41 to lead Serra to the win.

SA was led by Lizzie Straud's 51.

Girls

Eliz. Forward 201, Bethel Park 211

Senior Sarah Gossman, in her final home match at Butler's Golf Course, carded a 42 to lead the Warriors to a nonsection win against Bethel Park.

With the win, EF (6-3) await their team playoff fate as the section regular season concludes Tuesday. Junior Megan Lewonas will represent Elizabeth Forward in the WPIAL Individual Championship at Allegheny Country Club Thursday.

Volleyball

Elizabeth Forward 3, Thomas Jefferson 0

Kaitlyn Fournier finished with 14 kills and Bri Sersevic had 14 digs defensively to lead the Warriors past the

rival Jaguars in Section 3-3A volleyball action.

Gianna Tour and Skyler Shoben each finished with seven kills for EF, which won by scores of 27-25, 25-13 and 25-19.

California 3, Avella 0

Ca'mari Walden finished with 10 kills, four blocks and nine digs to lead the Trojans to a road win against the Eagles.

Tayla Pascoe (5) and Elaina Nicholson (4) combined for nine kills for California.

Set scores were 25-14, 25-18 and 25-10.

Uniontown 3, Ringgold 0

Alyssa Connolly had 15 assists and Zoe Mundorff finished with eight kills in Ringgold's loss to Uniontown.

The Rams suffered a 25-11 loss in the first set before making adjustments in the second. Ringgold had an eight-point lead in the second set before Uniontown rallied for a 25-21 win.

The third set was a back-and-forth affair, but Uniontown prevailed, 26-24, to take the match.

LOSS FROM B1

and Kubasky got his head on it for a 1-0 Viking lead.

Six minutes later, Dom Yoccolano booted a high ball into the top of the Mt. Pleasant goal box. Caruso outduelled two Viking defenders and was able to get a knee on the ball. It went over Menefee's head and tied the score. It was the first goal surrendered by Mt. Pleasant this season.

"It just wasn't in the cards for us tonight, they got one more across the end line than us," Snyder said.

The win was a huge confidence boost for a young Charleroi squad with just two seniors on its roster.

"That shows the dedication, grind and the boys upholding what Charleroi soccer is about," Ducoi said. "Just to see them step into the roles and fall right in line. They may be young but they're holding their own. It showed tonight."

Charleroi is back on its home pitch Wednesday against McGuffey.

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