

# Century edges Legacy 2-1 on Schwengler goal

Josh Dungan, Bismarck Tribune



Century's boys soccer team had played to a pair of ties in its last two games (Jamestown 2-2; Dickinson 3-3) entering Tuesday's tilt against Legacy.

So all the Patriots did was go to Legacy's home field and escape with a 2-1 win over the West Region-leading Sabers.

"For us, we had dropped points in our last two games," Century head coach Ryan Okerson said. "We knew coming in that Legacy was sitting on top as the best team in the West. We knew we had to bring an actual game to them, because they weren't going to give us the game.

"The last two games, we felt we should be owed something because of who we are. We knew against Legacy we'd have to earn it, they weren't going to hand it to us."

With players intimately familiar with their opponents, action started immediately after the kickoff, with both Legacy and Century registering a scoring chance before the game was two minutes old.

It was the Sabers that broke through first.

Almost 11 minutes in, Legacy's midfield forced a turnover by Century that quickly led into a run on Century's goal.

Century keeper Brayden Underhill came up to challenge the run by the Sabers, but Legacy's Ben McDonald tapped the ball past Underhill for a 1-0 lead.

"Any time you play a rivalry game and you put a goal on the board, regardless of how it goes in, the other team will be all over you for the next 15 to 20 minutes," Okerson said. "Brayden had the one ball get slotted through on him, but other than that, he controlled the box, he made sure he was in the way of every cross, every shot."

The deficit led to the usual press from the team trailing, and Legacy goalie Nathaniel Olheiser had to make a pair of great stops by the tips of his fingers to keep his team ahead.

"I'm sick of seeing Nate, he steals shots from us all the time and it's really getting old," Okerson joked. "He played extremely well, he had a couple of fingertip saves in the first half that could have put us up by two goals."

He wouldn't be perfect forever.

With just under 15 minutes until the half, Century took a shot on Legacy's net that Olheiser made a stop on, but after the ball bounced around in the box, Century's Brooks Turner took a shot that deflected off several Legacy defenders and sailed into the net.

"That first goal by Century, that bangs off a defender, as a goalie you're going one way because you know that's where the ball is going," Legacy coach Tom Marcis said. "All of the sudden the ball is going in a different direction. He was committed to go one way, then the ball bounced the other way, which is how soccer works."

"Any time you score in this game, it seems like the next five to 10 minutes the other team is pressing," Okerson said. "So the focus for us was transitioning to get numbers behind the ball, because in our previous few games we haven't done that."

Tied 1-1, Century started the second half pressing for more.

"We stressed to our guys that if we don't have the ball, we're on defense," Marcis said. "If we were making a run then Century played good defense and got the ball, we had to immediately get on them instead of letting Century build up."

Century's attack broke through yet again thanks to a miscue by a Legacy defender.

With a pair of Century attackers moving in on the Legacy net, Turner sent a pass into Legacy's goalie box, intended for teammate Kendall Schwengler, who was able to knock it into the back of the net.

"Realistically this game could have been zero-zero," Okerson said. "The goals that were scored weren't as quality as the goals that weren't scored."

Century's go-ahead goal came less than five minutes into the second half, and while the Patriots did spend a good deal of the next 20 minutes sallying back and forth against the Sabers, both Underhill and Olheiser stood their ground.

Legacy leaned hard on its possession game in the final 15 minutes, forcing Century to all but abandon its attack and focus on defending the net.

"We were able to weather their pressure today, but I don't know if we weather it again the next time," Okerson said. "Towards the end of the game we dropped pretty much everybody in to make it difficult to get the ball to the center. That kind of intensity is what you want to see from both teams."

Legacy had a number of excellent chances, perhaps none better than an absolute rocket of a shot that blasted hard off the center of the crossbar and back into the field of play.

"You got balls off the bar that didn't go in, which was a great shot, then you have one that bounces off an opponent and goes in," Marcis said. "It was one of those kinds of games. Both teams played to their strengths, so you can't complain about that at all."

Century, thanks in large part to a number of excellent saves by Underhill, escaped and held the lead they couldn't against Jamestown and Williston.

"Both teams played hard and played the way we wanted to," Marcis said. "That's what you want out of a high school game. Neither team quit, they played hard to the end, and it was a great game.

"There's a good chance if we play this way the rest of the season, I think we'll see each other deep in the West Region tournament."

### Century 2, Legacy 1

Century;1;1;--;2

Legacy;1;0;--;1

**First half:** 1. Leg, Ben McDonald (Urial Rivera), 10th minute. 2. Cen, Brooks Turner (unassisted), 26th minute.

**Second half:** 3. Cen, Kendall Schwengler (Brooks Turner), 45th minute.

**Goalkeeper saves:** Century -- Brayden Underhill 5-7--12. Legacy -- Nathaniel Olheiser 5-7--12.

**Penalties:** Century -- One yellow card (Kaiden Campbell). Legacy -- None.

**Records:** Century 4-0-2 overall, 3-0-2 West Region for 11 points; Legacy 5-2-0 overall, 4-2-0 West Region for 12 points.