

# Legacy Sabers soccer looking to finally reach top of mountain in 2024

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Posted: Aug 29, 2024

BISMARCK N.D.— Last year, the Sabers took a gut wrenching 2-1 loss to Shanley in the state championship, and the end of last season marked the end of the high school careers of a number of key players for Legacy. However, that doesn't change this team's mindset game in and game out.

"They expect to win. And so, as a new program, this is our 12th season as a program, you know, we were just trying to win games. Look competitive. We're beyond just looking competitive," Sabers head coach Tom Marcis said. "They feel no matter who we're playing that they should win every time they're out in the field. And so, when we don't, then they get disappointed. But it's building a culture of winning, and that's where we're at."

One of those key losses from last year was goalkeeper Nathaniel Olheiser. Stepping up in his place is Liam Horner, who earned a few starts in goal last year.

"So, we had a three year starter in our goal, but Liam was always right behind him. Liam, in many ways, I felt, was the second-best keeper in the conference," Marcis said. "It's just that he was behind the best keeper in the conference."

"I feel comfortable stepping in," Horner said. "I've been playing for a while now and I'm comfortable with my skill set and being able to make those saves and the other plays that we have to make."

Despite those losses, the team still has some guys who were a part of those tournament runs, including Kamden Kooiman, who's experience the last two seasons has left him hungry for a state title.

“I played in that state tournament my sophomore year and junior year where we were really close to getting all the way,” Kooiman said. “I mean, the taste of victory is there often, and I definitely want it. So, thinking that I have a chance of it this year, I definitely want to go for it.”

Now the team knows what to expect in the state tournament, and they’ll try to use that to reach the mountain top this year.

“We know what to expect. I mean, how do you prepare? I mean, it is just another game. And yet, on the other hand, it’s not just another game,” Marcis said. “So you don’t want to get too high to low. And like I said, over the last four years, they’ve been getting ready for that.”

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