

Legacy gets first win over Bismarck in girls soccer

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Legacy goalkeeper Rayne Hertel, right, makes a kick save in tight with Fanny Svensson, left, defending and Bismarck's Sophia Ness, center, during Saturday's game at Sanford Sports Complex.

TOM STROMME, TRIBUNE

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Bismarck has been a tough nut to crack for Legacy's girls soccer team since joining the ranks of the West Region varsity programs.

The Sabers finally solved the puzzle that is the Demons on Saturday afternoon at Sanford Sports Complex, riding a pair of first-half goals to a 3-1 victory over Bismarck, their first in program history.

"We had good conversations with the girls in getting out of a defensive mindset, with our starting keeper not being in, we had to attack more," Legacy co-head coach Mick Lenhardt said. "That led us to the two goals in the first half, that gave us some breathing room, which allowed us to play the style we want instead of the style we've had to. It's been a long time for Legacy girls soccer, but it's nice to finally get a win against a rival like Bismarck."

Legacy (3-4-1 West Region, overall) was down starting goaltender Berlynn Felchle due to a head injury -- Felchle is expected back to begin next week, according to Lenhardt -- so in stepped Rayne Hertel, a relatively untested player in net that was game to do what she could for her team.

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Hertel ended up being a large part of why the Sabers came away with a win, despite rarely appearing in net before Saturday. Making ungainly, yet timely, saves with whatever part of her was available against a Bismarck (3-3-1 West Region, overall) attack that did their best to take advantage of the Sabers' new goalkeeper, Hertel allowed just a single goal that even her luck couldn't handle after the Sabers were already up a pair of goals.

"We had to adjust, with Berlynn, our starting keeper being out, and Rayne Hertel stepped up in the Mandan game and we felt she gave us the best chance to win," Lenhardt said. "She hasn't played keeper in I don't know how long, but we said this week this had to be a team effort."

"All we told her was to make the simple saves, the saves you can make. We don't expect her to save everything, we don't expect her to read the ball like a keeper would, just save what you can save, save it with your hands, kick it away, just keep it out of the net, and she did that."

Leading Legacy's offense on Saturday was senior Madi Herzog.

Assisting on the Sabers' go-ahead goal in the first half and scoring off a corner kick set play in the second, Herzog had a two-point game and helped the Sabers to just their second game of scoring more than two goals this season and avenge an earlier loss to the Demons this season.

"This was a game where we connected as a team, we haven't completely clicked but this time our passing was a lot better," Herzog said. "We had time to practice and figure things out, which was really helpful. We've been defending a lot as a team, but we've been working on our offense, we did a lot better today."

Herzog's assist was a physical play on a drive into Bismarck's end. After both she and Bismarck defender Kambree Neumiller kicked at the ball at the same moment, Neumiller fell over the top of the ball with a helping hand from Herzog, who sent a ground-skimming cross to teammate Ella Jones just out of the reach of Bismarck goalie Aliveya Fink, with Jones punching the go-ahead goal home with authority.

"We did with one-twos on the outside, we cut inside on a cross and moved up the field as a team," Herzog said.

"Madi stepped up, we told the girls (on Friday) to show us what they had, and some girls stepped up and proved to us they deserved the minutes they're getting," Lenhardt said. "That was a nice give-and-go on the first one, they split between the outside back and the center back. Good combination passing going into the wind."

Legacy's second goal, scored by Grace Lelm not five minutes later, gave the Demons a taste of their own medicine offensively.

Countering after a push by Bismarck into Legacy's defensive end, Lelm drove down the field and after working free from Bismarck defender Molly McIntyre, sent a ball on net that Fink (seven saves), normally tall enough to knock down a shot at that height, was just out of position on and was unable to stop from curling into the net.

"Kudos to Grace, that was a nice goal, she beat the girl and we've been telling her to shoot quicker," Lenhardt said. "She's got a strong leg, she didn't try and get closer, she just put it on frame and got it into the back of the net. That's what you need, girls to take shots and take shots in crucial situations."

Bismarck's only goal of the game came on an impressive individual effort from midfielder Addison Massey early in the second half.

Intercepting a ball from Legacy defender Brooklyn Bengtson, Massey went to work, dodging the best efforts of three different Legacy defenders before working free and sending a shot into the top of Legacy's net, well out of the reach of Hertel.

"Addi Massey is a special player and she'll get hers, you just try and lock her down as much as you can," Lenhardt said. "She gets one, that's like LeBron scoring 30, it's gonna happen, what do you do. We had the wind in the second half, so the best way to play good defense, especially when Abby Burman went out with some back spasms, is to play offense.

"The more we keep the ball away from Addi and their skill players' feet, the better for us."

Herzog finished the game's scoring three minutes later, when she was on the receiving end of a well-placed corner kick by Katelyn Farrell.

Fink had made an initial attempt to go after the corner kick on the fly, but realized too late she couldn't get to it and was out of position as Herzog calmly sent her second goal of the season into the back of Bismarck's net.

"Our entire practice (on Friday), that's what we worked on," Herzog said. "We also have a really good girl (in Farrell) who is good at corners, which is helpful."

"That was huge, Katelyn gave a perfect ball for Madi to finish," Lenhardt said. "We worked on it in practice, so I'm glad it paid off."

After making a pair of stops with her legs in the first half on high-danger chances from the Demons, Hertel (eight saves) turned back to making saves with her legs late in the game when the Demons had three straight chances in the final five minutes either get whiffed on or get stymied by Legacy's keeper.

"She did great, and we should get Berlynn back on Tuesday," Lenhardt said. "That'll allow Rayne to go back to the field where she's a lot more relaxed."

Legacy's Fanny Svensson was called for the game's only yellow card midway through the second half.

Legacy had six corner kicks to Bismarck's five.

UP NEXT

Legacy: Plays at home at 6 p.m. against Dickinson on Tuesday, then "travel" to play Century at 8 p.m. on Friday.

Bismarck: Recovering after a three-game week, the Demons continue a string of seven of nine games being played at home this week against St. Mary's and Jamestown. The St. Mary's game kicks off at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, and the Demons play at 8 p.m. against the Blue Jays on Friday.



Legacy 3, Bismarck 1

Legacy;2;1;--;3

Bismarck;0;1;--;1

First half: 1. Leg, Ella Jones (Madi Herzog), 18:01. 2. Leg, Grace Lelm (Unassisted), 21:42.

Second half: 3. Bis, Addison Massey (Unassisted), 46:42. 4. Leg, Herzog (Katelyn Farrell), 49:53.

Goalkeeper saves: Legacy -- Rayne Hertel 3-5--8. Bismarck -- Aliveya Fink 1-6--7.

Corner kicks: Legacy -- 6. Bismarck -- 5.

Yellow cards: Legacy -- Fanny Svensson.

Records: Legacy 3-4-1 West Region for 10 points, 3-4-1 overall; Bismarck 3-3-1 West Region for 10 points, 3-3-1 overall.

By JOSH DUNGAN

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