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## Sabers off to fast start on the pitch

**JOSH DUNGAN**

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**T**wo games down, two wins in the book.

Legacy's girls soccer team is off to a solid start, beating Century in a conference non-counter 4-0 and pounding Williston 8-0 on the road.

"We've been happy with how the season has started," Legacy co-head coach Mick Lenhardt said. "Our defense has started off strong, we have a strong captain back there in Madison Lein anchoring our centerback. Then we have three new starters back there, and all three have picked up the positions well."

After early questions about where goals might come from outside Oakley Will, five other players have scored at least one goal for the Sabers, and eight, including Will, have points.

"Last year when Oakley wasn't scoring, the team would get a little nervous, so we've been focusing on getting other girls involved and building their confidence," Lenhardt said. "We've asked them to take shots, not to shy away from wanting the ball in the attacking third, and when they have a chance to shoot it, to shoot it."

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Will has been a big part of Legacy's offense.

After tallying the Sabers' fourth goal against Century, she completed her first hat trick of the season against Williston.

"Oakley is always going to get her goals," Lenhardt said. "Your top players always do, but you have to have the other girls pick it up and keep some pressure off of her."

In net, the Sabers have been able to give time to both junior Ava Hanzal, who is expected to take the majority of time in net, and freshman Berlynn Felchle.

Hanzal played the entire game against Williston, but subbed out for Felchle in the Century game.

"We talked as a team that we wanted to get Berlynn some experience in the non-counter games so she can get used to the pace of play at the varsity level in case a situation would ever arise where Ava would get hurt," Lenhardt said. "Ava has been cool, calm and collected for us the first two games."

Hanzal and the Sabers were supposed to have gotten their toughest test of the season to date today, but cold weather cancelled the Sabers' trip to Minot to face the two-time defending state champion Majettes.

"Playing the best team in the West, the best team in the state the last two years, that only benefits us," Lenhardt said. "We want to be in the spot where we can hang with a team like Minot, because we'd rather take on challenges than not."

Minot has raced to a 4-0 start, scoring at least six goals in every game.

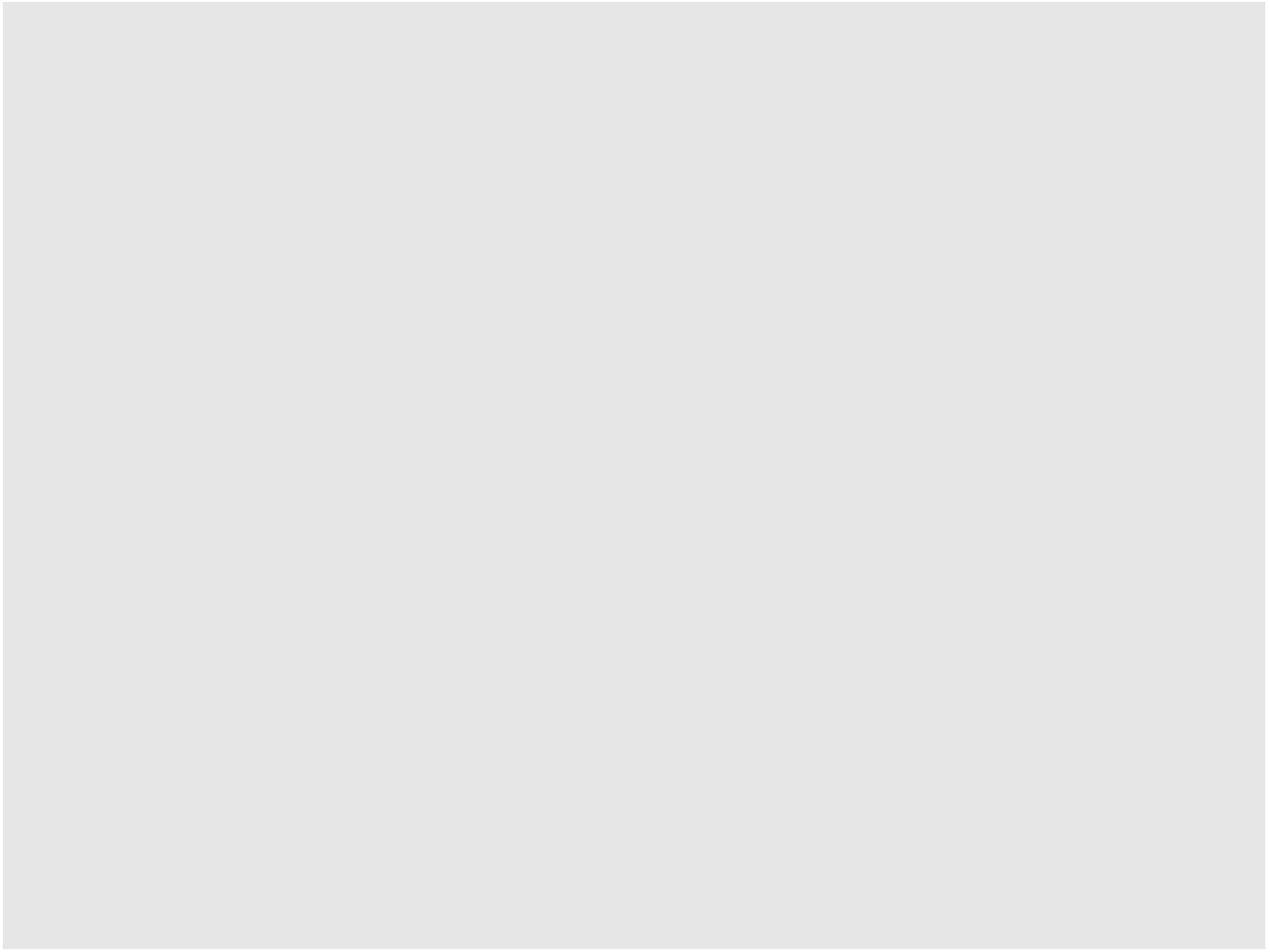
"Minot is a very good possession team, and you have to play at their speed, because if you try to slow the game down, they can ping away at your keeper all game long," Lenhardt said. "It's going to be a mix of individual defending where our girls aren't shying away from the challenge of playing some top players. If you're able to keep some possession, and force them to defend a little, we can keep them away from the goal a little."

The continued winter weather has prevented teams from getting into a rhythm.

"We haven't played since last Friday, so we're going on day 8 without a game," Lenhardt said. "You can have intense practices, you can have intense scrimmages, but it's not the same thing as getting out on the field."

Five of Legacy's next six games will be played on home turf and eight of their final nine will be in Bismarck or Mandan.

"The girls are looking forward to it, because we like playing at Legacy," Lenhardt said. "They're looking forward to getting in front of the home friends. With the schedule the way it is where we're only playing one counter game against each West Region team this season, every game is huge. We have a grind of a schedule coming up, but we're looking forward to the challenge."



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