

Point soccer opens year with 2 road wins

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

BECKLEY, W.Va. — Different battles. Same result.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team started the 2018 season on a solid note following a pair of road wins at Independence and PikeView this past weekend in a pair of non-conference matches at the YMCA Field.

The Black Knights (2-0-0) opened the campaign with a decisive 6-0 triumph over the Patriots on Friday night, then rallied back from a one-goal deficit on Saturday for a thrilling 2-1 decision over the Panthers.

PPHS outshot Independence by a sizable 37-2 overall margin, including a 17-2 edge in shots on goal, as the Red and Black built a 2-0 intermission advantage.

Adam Veroski opened the scoring after receiving a crossing pass from Jaden Reed in the third minute for a 1-0 edge. Veroski added a second goal in the 11th minute following a crossing pass from Cohen Yates.

Point caught a lucky bounce early in the second half as a corner kick bounced off of an IHS player, resulting in an own goal during the 43rd minute.

Isaiah Snyder buried a line drive from 18 yards out into the opposite corner for a 4-0 lead in the 47th minute, then Garrett Hatten planted a loose ball from 12 yards out in the 66th minute for a five-goal cushion.

Snyder completed the six-goal victory in the 69th minute with another successful 18-yard boot to the opposite corner.

Point Pleasant claimed a 3-2 edge in direct kicks and 3-0 advantage in corner kicks. PPHS keeper Nick Smith made two saves for a shutout, while Colton Blackcorn stopped 12 shots in the setback.

The Black Knights were held scoreless in the first half against PikeView, plus Point was unlucky with a bounce over that same stretch.

Gage Damewood found himself in an opportunistic position as the sophomore played a bounce off of a defender in front of the net. The ball took a weird bounce and spun itself inside the post, giving PVHS a 1-0 lead in the eighth minute.

Veroski ended Point's scoreless drought in the 48th minute after booting a 22-yard bullet past the diving attempt of Panther keeper Colton Caskey, tying the game at one.

The eventual clincher came in the 69th minute as Veroski buried a penalty kick into the lower right side of the goal.

The penalty happened when Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy was tripped by multiple defenders while setting up a pass.

The Black Knights outshot PikeView by a slim 15-13 overall margin, which included an 8-5 deficit in shots on goal. Point also claimed a 4-3 edge in corner and was whistled for only six of the 21 fouls in the contest.

Smith stopped seven shots in the triumph, while Caskey made only three saves in goal for the Panthers.

"This was a very good win for us. We haven't had a come-from-behind win for years, and last year we were always on the other side of one-goal games," PPHS coach Chip Wood said following the PikeView victory. "I thought we did a great job of making adjustments in game and it really made a difference in getting some good chances in the second half.

"This was a really good experience for this group in traveling to Beckley. We took care of business in both games, which is a great way to start the season."

Point Pleasant returns to action Saturday when it hosts Independence.

Point Pleasant blanks Patriots, 11-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — A memorable moment in history.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer program picked up its 350th career victory while also posting its second shutout win over Independence on Saturday in a resounding 11-0 victory at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The Black Knights (3-0-0) were dominant in their 2018 home debut as the Red and Black mustered all 16 shots in the contest while also having seven different players score in the triumph.

PPHS scored the first of its eight first-half goals in the third minute as Alberto Castillo netted a pass from Isaiah Snyder, then Castillo assisted Jaden Reed on a goal in the sixth minute for a quick 2-0 cushion.

Adam Veroski tacked on back-to-back goals in the 11th minute and 14th minute, with Zach Rediger assisting on the latter score for a 4-0 edge.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy scored in the 18th minute on a pass from Garrett Hatten, then Luke Pinkerton netted a pair of Castillo passes for goals in the 30th and 32nd minutes — giving the hosts a seven-goal advantage.

Cohen Yates added the final first-half goal after netting a Hatten pass in the 33rd minute.

The game remained at 8-0 until the final 10 minutes of regulation. Connor Fields netted a Nic Matheny pass in the 70th minute for a 9-0 contest.

Veroski posted a hat trick in the 76th minute after planting a pass from Austin Weikle, making it a 10-goal lead. Castillo stole a pass and scored on a long boot in the 78th minute, wrapping up the 11-0 outcome.

Point Pleasant also claimed a season sweep of the Patriots after earning a 6-0 win in Beckley back on Aug. 17.

Nick Smith recorded his second shutout of the year, despite not facing a single shot attempt in the game. PPHS also claimed a 6-0 advantage in corner kicks.

"Everybody played big minutes and we got to move people around a little. The big thing that we demonstrated was a lot of improvement over the game against them last Friday," PPHS coach Chip Wood said afterwards. "They were without their starting keeper and that really hurt them, but we also were putting everything on goal in good spots. We had a lot of unselfish play, which made for a good win."

Point Pleasant traveled to Ohio Valley Christian on Monday and returns to action Wednesday when it hosts Gallia Academy at 7 p.m.

Point Pleasant blanks OVCS, 8-0

SPORTS

By Scott Jones - sjones@aimmediamidwest.com

GALLIPOLIS, Ohio. — Another clean sheet for the Black Knights.

The Point Pleasant boys varsity soccer team improved its mark to 4-0 this season following an 8-0 victory over host Ohio Valley Christian on Monday night in a non-conference matchup in Gallia County.

The visiting Black Knights (4-0) scored four goals in the first half en route to the shutout win. The victory serves as the third shutout in four matches for the Red and Black, as well as the second straight contest without allowing a goal.

The game also served as the season opener for OVCS (0-1), playing in its first contest since the 2016 campaign following a season without fielding a program.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy recorded the first goal of the contest at the 34:22 mark of the first half en route to a hat trick.

Adam Veroski added two goals, while Garrett Hatten, Alberto Castillo and Isaiah Snyder provided one goal apiece, respectively.

Kaydean Eta and Jayden Reed each provided an assist as Point Pleasant outshot the Defenders by a sizable 35-7 overall margin and also claimed a 6-0 edge in corner kicks.

OVCS goalkeeper Conner Walter finished with five saves in the contest, while PPHS junior Nick Smith saved seven — including a penalty kick opportunity by the Defenders with 7:57 remaining in the first half.

Following the game, PPHS head coach was pleased with his club's performance — but noted the team's low tempo in the first half.

"We came out really lackadaisical in the first half," Wood said. "We didn't play up to our potential. We discussed it at half time with the boys and they came out much better and played with a lot more energy and a greater sense of urgency in the second half. I know we were up 4-0 at halftime, but it just seemed like we were struggling to put anything together.

"We played strong in the second half and were much better. I was proud of them for responding at halftime. Right now our strengths are the central portion of the field. We are able to control things with our forwards and midfielders. I feel like our strength is up the middle and getting forward. Defensively, we have to be way more solid than we were in the first half. I think going forward we have to improve things on the outside and on the wings."

For OVCS head coach Jason Beaver, the setback was a learning opportunity for his young club.

"For as young as this team is they did a really good job despite the score," Beaver said. "Our goalkeeper had a lot to deal with, but I think he did well with what he was faced with. As a whole, our team has a lot of practice to do on containment defense, we have to be able to break down and work on our passing.

"We have to take this and teach on this and use this as a learning tool and not a negative. We need to move on from this experience and focus on our next game."

While the Defenders' return to the soccer pitch for the first time since 2016 was not an ideal outcome for the club, Beaver was happy for his players to be back for the 2018 campaign.

"It's huge for Ohio Valley Christian soccer to be back on the field," Beaver said. "After not having a team, we are excited to be back. We do have a learning curve. We are going to have to overcome that, but I'm very proud of where we stand. We have a group of kids here that have a lot of heart and want to play. I feel like we fight hard for what we have out there. We just have to take it one game at a time."

With the shutout victory, the Black Knights have combined to outscore their opponents 27-1 through four games.

PPHS returns to action on Wednesday when it hosts Gallia Academy, while OVCS next faces Belpre on Thursday at home.

Point downs Poca, 5-1

SPORTS

By Scott Jones - sjones@aimmediamidwest.com

POCA, W.Va. — Score early, score often.

The Point Pleasant boys varsity soccer team improved its mark to 5-1 this season following an 5-1 victory over host Poca on Thursday night in a non-conference matchup in Putnam County.

The visiting Black Knights (5-1) scored three goals in the first half en route to the win.

Alberto Castillo scored in the 4th minute of the contest for PPHS, after receiving a cross from Garrett Hatten, to put the Black Knights ahead at 1-0.

Castillo added a second goal in the 12th minute, off an assist by Jaden Reed, to extend Point Pleasant's advantage to 2-0.

PPHS widen its margin to 3-0 on a goal by Hajin Kim in the 25th minute. Castillo was credited with the assist as the Red and Black carried a three-goal advantage into intermission.

Point Pleasant furthered its lead to 4-0, 8:00 into the second half, as Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy buried a shot off and assist by Kim.

Garrett Hatten tallied the Black Knights final goal of the contest, at the 70:00 minute mark, to push PPHS ahead 5-0.

Poca cut the deficit to 5-1, at the 79:48 mark when Parker Bonnett scored what served as the Dots' lone goal of the match.

Point Pleasant outshot the Defenders by a sizable 17-9 overall margin and also claimed a 6-1 edge in corner kicks.

PPHS junior goalkeeper Nick Smith finished with with eight saves, while PHS had 12.

Point Pleasant head coach Chip Wood was pleased with his team's overall effort — particularly with the absence of two key contributors.

"We had a hard time adjusting to the narrow field," Wood said. "But we controlled the game and the pace of the game. Braxton did a great job of getting us settled and distributing the ball where it needed to go. We were missing Adam Veroski — our leading scorer — and Isaiah Snyder on defense, but Kaydean Eta stepped up and filled in for Isaiah and we covered Adam's spot with a trio of players."

The Black Knights returned to action on Saturday to host Fairland.

Blue Devils defeat Point, 1-0

SPORTS

By Scott Jones - sjones@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — A lightning-quick ending.

The Gallia Academy boys soccer team earned a 1-0 victory over host Point Pleasant on Wednesday night in a non-conference contest following a stoppage due to inclement weather after one half of play.

The presence of lightning loomed in the backdrop of Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field from the onset of the match. However, the game was halted by officials prior to the start of the second half following the announcement of a 30-minute delay.

Gallia Academy (2-0-1) scored the game's lone goal when Dalton Vanco's shot from inside the box found the back of the net at the 13:42 mark, as Justin Day was credited with the assist.

For PPHS (4-1), the goal was only the second surrendered in five contests, having combined to outscore their opponents 27-2 thus far this season.

GAHS goalkeeper Andrew Toler finished with five saves in the contest, while PPHS junior Nick Smith saved eight. The Blue Devils outshot the Black Knights by a narrow 10-9 overall margin, as Point Pleasant claimed a 4-2 edge in corner kicks.

Following the match, GAHS head coach Cory Camden was pleased with his team's performance — but noted he would have liked to see the contest played full-time.

"It's very unfortunate we didn't get to finish the game," Camden said. "You want to be able to play, get more guys in and as much playing time as possible. I thought we held strong. Our keeper did a great job, he set up some great play up front. Some of our midfield play we stepped to the ball very well. We worked on trying to deliver the ball to the wings and set something up in the middle, but kind of struggled. We ran a lot through the right side of the field, so it would have been nice to have been able to open the field up.

"I thought it was an all around team performance," Camden said. "From top to bottom I thought we played a great game. Every time we come over it's a very tough game. We play on grass, so playing on turf the ball is a little quicker, which is something that has to be factored in. Point Pleasant has a great team. I think both teams played very well."

Both teams returned to action on Thursday as Gallia Academy hosted Ohio Valley Conference foe Fairland, while Point Pleasant traveled to face Poca.

Black Knights blank Fairland, 2-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — The Black Knights have found the key to success.

Just get the match to go the distance in regulation.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team picked up its fourth shutout of the season while notching its second straight victory on Saturday afternoon with a 2-0 decision over visiting Fairland in a non-conference friendly at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The host Black Knights (6-1-0) were tested by a stingy Dragons defense that proved to be formidable in the final third of the field. The Red and Black claimed a slim 13-10 edge in shots on goal, but the extra chances did ultimately prove to be beneficial.

PPHS cracked the scoring in the 25th minute as Alberto Castillo found the back of the net for a 1-0 cushion. Castillo buried a point blank shot that was tapped over to him by an assisting Cohen Yates for the only goal of the first half.

Castillo again found the net in the 50th minute as Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy bounced a pass into the box that Castillo chased down and buried inside the left post, allowing the hosts to secure a 2-0 cushion.

The Black Knights — whose lone loss came in a 1-0 decision to Gallia Academy that was called at halftime due to lightning — were whistled for eight of the 14 fouls in the game. FHS also claimed a small 2-1 edge in corner kicks.

Afterwards, PPHS coach Chip Wood noted that he was impressed enough with Fairland that he had to tinker a bit with his lineup. He also felt that Saturday's victory was as solid as any on the program's resume thus far.

"We had some issues finding passing lanes in the final third today, so we mixed up the formation a little with some personnel changes. This allowed us to put our strengths up against their weaknesses and break through," Wood said. "They had a very disciplined back line and center defensive mid who made it difficult to push through the passing lanes. They were easily the most disciplined back four we've faced this year."

Nick Smith made 10 saves in goal for the Black Knights, while Fairland keeper Christian Italiano stopped 11 shots in the setback.

Point Pleasant travels to Belpre on Tuesday for a non-conference match at 6 p.m. The Black Knights also return home Thursday when they welcome Lincoln County at 7 p.m.

Black Knights blast Belpre, 7-2

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

BELPRE, Ohio — Even in this heat, it still takes some time to warm up.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team broke away from a one-all tie in the 27th minute and ultimately never looked back on Tuesday night during a 7-2 victory over host Belpre in a non-conference match in Washington County.

The Black Knights (7-1-0) never trailed in the contest as guests picked up their third consecutive triumph in a rather impressive fashion.

The Red and Black secured a permanent cushion in the 27th minute as Adam Veroski scored his second goal of the game while dribbling through two defenders to bury a shot in the left corner.

From there, Point Pleasant went on to add an Alberto Castillo goal — on an assist from Garrett Hatten — in the 34th minute to claim a 3-1 advantage at the break.

The Black Knights followed by scoring the first four goals of the second half, all of which came during a 30-minute blitz of offensive pressure.

Hatten drove home an 18-yard low line drive that bounced off the keeper's hands, but ultimately found the net in the 45th minute for a 4-1 edge.

Castillo notched his second goal on a perfectly placed pass from Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy deep in Point territory, giving the guests a 5-1 advantage in the 55th minute.

Castillo returned the favor five minutes later after finding Hatten in front of the net, and Hatten won a 1-on-1 battle with the keeper to give the Black Knights a 6-1 lead in the 60th minute.

Castillo picked up a hat trick in the 70th minute after receiving a pass from Cohen Yates. Castillo played the ball of his chest to his foot, then popped the ball up and launched a volley from 12 yards out that found the upper left corner for a 7-1 lead.

Asaphe Santana scored on a penalty kick for BHS in the 72nd minute, ending the home scoring drought while making it a 7-2 contest.

Veroski gave Point a 1-0 advantage in the 15th minute thanks to an assist by Castillo. Andrew Curtis tied the game at one in the 20th minute on a 20-yard midfield blast that found the back lower left corner.

The Black Knights claimed an 18-11 edge in shots on goal and also posted a 6-2 advantage in corner kicks. Belpre was whistled for a dozen of the 18 fouls in the contest.

Point Pleasant entered the game ranked eighth in the Class AA rankings and 14th overall in the state of West Virginia. The Black Knights have also outscored their opponents by a sizable 41-5 margin and have a pair of double-digit goal scorers already this fall.

Still, PPHS coach Chip Wood noted that as good as things have been of late — Tuesday night was a little bit of a step back in some regards. Nonetheless, given the heat and the number of games over the last two weeks — Wood was still pleased with the end result.

"The score really doesn't indicate how tight this game was. We had a lot of issues, we took off Labor Day and we looked very off all night," Wood said. "We just seemed to play sluggish tonight and we weren't very sharp, but we've played a lot of soccer in the last 12 days. I was proud of our guys for keeping their composure and just playing the game out tonight."

Nick Smith stopped 10 shots in net for the Black Knights.

Point Pleasant returns to action Thursday when it hosts Lincoln County at 7 p.m. The Black Knights also welcome OVCS on Saturday at 11 a.m.

Black Knights blank Panthers, 4-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Unbeaten no more.

A pair of top-10 Class AA teams were scheduled for battle, but the Point Pleasant boys soccer team appeared to be the only group with any ammunition on Thursday night following a 4-0 triumph over visiting Lincoln County in a non-conference match at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The host Black Knights (8-1-0) notched their fourth consecutive victory — tying a season-high mark — while also handing the Panthers (7-1-0) their first setback of the year. It was also the fifth shutout posted by the Red and Black this fall.

PPHS — which entered the contest ranked eighth in the Class AA-A poll — dodged a few bullets throughout the course of regulation, but the hosts also had a few unlucky breaks along the way as well.

Lincoln County — which entered the game ranked sixth in the Class AA-A poll — had a few decent shots sail either wide or high of the net in the opening 15 minutes, while Point Pleasant had little luck in breaking through with a handful of shots ending up on goal.

In the 19th minute, however, the Black Knights cracked the scoreboard as Garrett Hatten found Alberto Castillo open in the mid-front.

Castillo had to make a sliding kick on his shot attempt in front, which cleared two defenders and trickled passed the keeper on the low left side, giving the hosts a 1-0 advantage.

Point Pleasant took that one-goal cushion into the intermission, but the hosts really turned up the intensity in the second half — which showed later in the final score.

Adam Veroski made it a 2-0 contest in the 46th minute as the sophomore had a shot essentially land on his foot while standing in front of the goal. Veroski buried the boot to the low left side to double the home team's advantage.

Veroski netted his second goal of the game in the 59th minute, thanks to an assist from Castillo. Veroski received a pass from 20 yards out and floated a shot top-shelf, which managed to work its way under the cross bar for a 3-0 cushion.

Castillo capped the scoring in the 75th minute after taking a Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy pass and working through two defenders before completing the breakaway goal.

The Black Knights also had a penalty kick goal in the 78th minute, but Garrett Hatten's boot was waived off due to an early start on the offense.

Point Pleasant claimed a 17-10 edge in shots on goal and also had eight corner kicks in the triumph. The Black Knights have also outscored opponents by a 45-5 overall margin this season.

Overall, PPHS coach Chip Wood was pretty happy with the end result ... as well as where his team appears to be at roughly the midway point of the season.

"Honestly, their opportunities came because we were creating so much offense. They dropped a lot of people back into our attack zone and when they could gain possession, it left them a lot of open space on the other side of the field. Lincoln County had some good looks, but Nick (Smith), the back row and the center mids were solid on that end of the field tonight," Wood said. "The good thing on the offensive side was that we made a mid-game adjustment and the kids executed it perfectly. We started the second half sending more crosses in the air to open up that middle. It took about a half-dozen of them, but it really paid off for us in the end. It was a really good win."

Nick Smith recorded his fifth shutout of the year in stopping 10 shots in goal for Point Pleasant.

The Black Knights host Ohio Valley Christian on Saturday, then take a 10-day break in the schedule before resuming play at Chapenville on Sept. 18.

"As of Saturday, we will have played 10 games in 22 days ... so I'm really proud that we can still come out and put in this kind of effort. It really shows that the early season conditioning is working," Wood said. "We need to get through one more game with Ohio Valley Christian, then we have 10 days off on the schedule. We have several things to work on to get better over that time, but it will also give us some time to recover for the stretch run."

Point blanks Defenders, 7-0

SPORTS

By Scott Jones - sjones@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — The first half told the story.

The Point Pleasant boys varsity soccer team improved its mark to 9-1 this season following an 7-0 victory over visiting Ohio Valley Christian School on Saturday night in a non-conference matchup in Mason County.

The host Black Knights (9-1-0) scored each of their seven goals in the first half en route to the shutout victory.

Alberto Castillo scored in the 3rd minute of the contest for PPHS, after receiving an assist from Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy, to put PPHS ahead at 1-0.

Garrett Hatten added a second goal in the 5th minute, off an assist by Castillo, to extend Point Pleasant's advantage to 2-0.

PPHS widen its margin to 3-0 on a goal by Cohen Yates off an assist by Hatten in the 7th minute.

Point Pleasant furthered its lead to 4-0, 10:00 into the contest, as Adam Veroski buried a shot off from 20 yard away from net.

Castillo tallied his second goal of the match at the 15:00 minute mark, to push PPHS ahead 5-0. Kaydean Eta was credited with the assist on a through ball from center to the right side of goal.

The Big Blacks widen the margin to 6-0, in the 24th minute when Peyton Hughes scored on a pass from Castillo.

Eta tallied the final goal of the contest in the 42nd minute when his shot from inside 18 yards found the back of the net.

Point Pleasant outshot the Defenders by a sizable 18-4 overall margin and also claimed a 6-0 advantage in corner kicks.

PPHS junior goalkeepers Isaiah Snyder finished with two saves, while Nick Smith and Zach Rediger were credited finished with with one save apiece, respectively. In contrast, OVCS finished with 11 saves.

Point Pleasant head coach Chip Wood was pleased with his team's overall effort — particularly with the ability of his team to get everyone involved.

"They ran a little offside trap defensively, and it threw us off for a couple minutes" Wood said. "But we started hitting early through balls and long diagonal passes and utilized dribbling to beat their high defensive line and the trap. Everybody got to play in the game. It was good to get some guys big minutes who haven't played much lately. And I was really proud of the guys for listening and playing within certain guidelines while respecting OVCS."

With the victory Point Pleasant earns a season sweep of the Defenders having picked up a 8-0 win on Aug. 27 in Gallia County.

The Black Knights take a break in the schedule before resuming play at Chapenville on Sept. 18.

Black Knights rally past Scott, 3-2

SPORTS

By Scott Jones - sjones@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — A fantastic finish for the home team.

The Point Pleasant boys varsity soccer team trailed 2-1 at halftime to visiting Scott on Thursday night, but the Black Knights rallied for two goals in the second half en route to a 3-2 victory at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

Scott's (9-3) Sean Hill opened the scoring in the 15th minute of the contest when his free kick from 27 yards reached the goal just inside the right post to propel the Skyhawks to a 1-0 lead.

Point Pleasant (10-1-0) knotted the game at 1-all when Adam Veroski buried a penalty kick into the right upper corner in the 31st minute.

The Skyhawks soared to a 2-1 lead when Carson Asbury's shot found the net in the 37th minute, as the visitors took a one-goal advantage into the intermission.

Following halftime, Alberto Castillo — with an assist from Garrett Hatten — knotted the contest at 2-2 in the 47th minute.

PPHS scored its third and final goal of the match in the 65th minute, as Adam Veroski's shot from 10 yards beat the keeper and pushed the hosts to a 3-2 lead.

Both teams were held without a goal the remainder of the match as Point Pleasant closed out the one-goal victory.

The two clubs both finished with 16 shots apiece, respectively, in the contest, with Scott claiming a slight 6-4 edge in corners.

PPHS junior goalkeeper Nick Smith finished with with 14 saves, while Scott had 13.

Point Pleasant head coach Chip Wood was pleased with his team's overall effort — particularly their ability to execute the game plan.

"I really thought we controlled the majority of the game," Wood said. "We had a good bit more possession and kept the ball settled. Scott was hands down the best team we've played all year. We had an opportunity to scout them and we had a very specific game plan tactically. The boys executed the game plan well. They kept their composure and I know we deserved that victory."

Next up for the Black Knights, a road date with Huntington St. Joseph on Tuesday.

Point edges Red Devils, 1-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

RAVENSWOOD, W.Va. — It only takes one.

The Point Pleasant soccer team picked up its fourth consecutive victory while spoiling host Ravenswood's Senior Night festivities on Tuesday night during a 1-0 decision in a non-conference friendly in Jackson County.

The visiting Black Knights (14-2-0) found themselves entrenched in a battle from the start, as neither they nor the Red Devils (8-10-1) scored in the opening half.

PPHS, however, finally caught a break in the 65th minute — and it came with some international flavor.

Senior Hajin Kim ran down an Alberto Castillo crossing pass behind the RHS defense, then made a one-on-one move to beat the keeper for a 1-0 advantage.

Both Kim and Castillo — a junior — are foreign exchange students at Point Pleasant.

Ravenswood claimed a slim 15-14 edge in shot in goal, but backup PPHS keeper Zach Rediger stopped all 15 shots that came his way to preserve the shutout.

RHS was whistled for a dozen of the 18 fouls and also secured an 8-4 advantage in corner kicks.

Afterwards, Point Pleasant coach Chip Wood was very proud of his troops for getting out with a win.

"We faced a lot of adversity tonight because our starting keeper was sick and unavailable. We ended the game with three starters not on the field. We had to do a lot of juggling around with the lineup," Wood said. "Zach played really well in net for us and we did what good teams do. We worked hard and overcame and did just enough to win when adversity struck."

Point Pleasant returns to action Thursday when it hosts Belpre at 7 p.m. The Black Knights will also face St. Marys at home on Saturday at 11:30 a.m.

Black Knights sweep Belpre, 3-1

SPORTS

By Scott Jones - sjones@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Although the temperature made for a cold night, the Black Knights remained red hot.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team carried a one-goal advantage into intermission on Thursday night and never looked back en route to a 3-1 victory over visiting Belpre in a non-conference match in Mason County.

The Black Knights (15-2-0) never trailed in the contest as the the hosts picked up their fifth consecutive win in a tightly contested contest.

The Red and Black scored the first goal of the game a mere 42 seconds into play as Alberto Castillo scored — on an assist from senior Hajin Kim — to claim a 1-0 lead.

From there, Point Pleasant widen its margin to 2-0 on an Adam Veroski goal in the 19th minute.

Belpre's Asaphe Santana narrowed the deficit to 2-1 when his free kick found the back of the net with 17:51 remaining until the break.

Both teams were held without a goal for the remainder of the first half, as PPHS held a single-goal lead at the intermission.

The two squads remained separated by just one tally for a span of 47:18. Veroski, however ended the scoring drought, when he netted his second goal of the contest — with 10:33 remaining in the match — to extend the Red and Black's advantage to 3-1.

From there, both teams were held without a goal as Point Pleasant closed out the two-goal victory.

The Black Knights claimed an 22-10 edge in shots on goal and also posted a 5-2 advantage in corner kicks.

Belpre senior goalkeeper Rawlin Barber finished with eight saves. In contrast, Point Pleasant's Nick Smith and Zach Rediger stopped three shots apiece, respectively.

The victory for Red and Black provided a season sweep of the Golden Eagles, having earned a 7-2 triumph on Sept. 4 in Belpre.

In their two meetings this season, the two squads combined for a total of 71 shots on goal, with the Black Knights claiming a 40-21 edge. PPHS also claimed an 11-4 advantage in corner kicks, having earned a 6-2 edge in the initial head-to-head contest of the season.

The team also celebrated Senior Night festivities prior to the start of the match recognizing Kim and Castillo.

Following the game, PPHS head coach Chip Wood — who earned his 101st career victory — was pleased with his teams performance.

"We did a great job of controlling the ball and working the ball around," Wood said. "The really had their defense staked tonight with some of their more skilled and physical players. They gave us some challenges out there trying to beat them at the back. We weren't able to play them as direct as we did in our first meeting this season, they had a lot of strength and speed on the back line in this game.

"We maintained a lot of possession, however, and worked the ball quite well," Wood said. "We were making the right runs, but we seemed a half-step behind tonight. Hopefully, we can get back to our normal speed. The past two games I feel like we've not been playing at the pace we normally do. Tonight our passes just seemed a half-second too slow."

Wood also was candid with how important the win was for his senior players.

"It was really fun," Wood said. "We appreciate the foreign exchange students we have. Hajin works really hard for us and a true member of the team. Alberto is one of the best exchange students we've ever had to adapt to what we do. It was really nice that our first goal of the game was Hajin to Alberto. To open up our game and have both of the players we were honoring get a stat, that was fun."

The Black Knights returned to Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field on Saturday to host St. Marys for their final regular season contest of the the 2018 campaign.

Black Knights shutout Red Devils, 2-0

SPORTS

By Scott Jones - sjones@aimmediamidwest.com

Point Pleasant freshman Jaden Reed (9) attempts a shot during the first half of the Black Knight's 2-0 victory over Ravenswood on Wednesday night in Mason County.

Scott Jones|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — The crusade continues for the Black Knights.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team earned a 2-0 victory over visiting Ravenswood in the Class AA/A Region IV Section 1 tournament on Wednesday at the Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County, as the Black Knights picked up their second win over the Red Devils this season.

PPHS (17-2-0) opened the scoring in the contest, as Jaden Reed propelled the hosts to a 1-0 advantage at the 31:22 mark of the first period.

The Black Knights carried a one-goal advantage into the intermission, as the hosts outshot RHS (9-12-1) by a margin of 8-6 through the first 40 minutes of play.

Following the break, Point Pleasant's Adam Veroski's scored on an assist from Alberto Castillo to widen the margin to 2-0.

The Black Knights outshot the visitors by a slim 18-12 overall margin, while also claiming a 5-2 edge in corner kicks.

Point Pleasant junior goalkeeper Nick Smith finished with four saves, while Ravenswood senior Joshua Mize finished with nine saves.

The Red Devils were whistled for eight of the 14 fouls in the contest.

Following the victory, Point Pleasant coach Chip Wood was proud of his team's effort in the win.

"They didn't really engage us in the match," Wood said. "In the first half they were dropping nine players back defensively. They really sat back and seemed to wait on the counter-attack. We had a lot more energy in the second half and things opened up for us. We had some opportunities. We really just played the game that they were going to give us, so it was the type of game where we just had to work the ball around and be patient."

The victory for PPHS was the second shutout win over Ravenswood of the 2018 campaign, as the Red and Black also had 1-0 triumph in the regular season, on Oct. 9 in Jackson County.

The top-seeded Black Knights returned to action on Thursday to face third-seeded Williamstown at Shawnee Sports Complex in Dunbar, W.Va. The YellowJackets earned their way into the sectional championship contest by defeating Nitro on Oct. 16 by a final of 2-1.

Williamstown tops Black Knights, 3-1

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

Bryan Walters|OVP Sports

DUNBAR, W.Va. — All good things must come to an end.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team had its magical 2018 campaign come to a screeching halt on Thursday following a 3-1 setback to Williamstown in the Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 championship match held on Brickstreet Field #1 at the Shawnee Sports Complex in Kanawha County.

The top-seeded Black Knights (17-3-0) were gunning for their first sectional title since the 2011 campaign, but the Yellowjackets (15-6-2) unleashed an offensive onslaught that eventually took its toll by night's end.

WHS produced a sizable 32-10 advantage in total shots, which included a 15-8 edge in shots on goal. More importantly, that differential was noticeable from the start as the guests held leads of 17-5 and 7-3 in those same categories at the intermission.

Still, despite the large discrepancy in offensive attempts, the Red and Black found themselves in good shape at the break as both teams entered halftime scoreless.

The score remained deadlocked at zero for another 10 minutes in the second half, but the Maroon and Gold — and their rapid-fire approach — finally caught up with Point Pleasant in the 51st minute.

Dylan Cosner had a pass land on his foot inside 15 feet of the goal, then split a pair of Point defenders to uncork a shot from the right corner of the goal box. The attempt caromed off of Point keeper Nick Smith's hands and momentum carried the deflection into the back of the net — giving WHS a 1-0 advantage.

Four minutes later, Gavin Bosgraf successfully lofted a left-footed shot from the left corner of the keeper box to the lower right corner of the goal — allowing Williamstown to secure a 2-0 lead in the 55th minute.

The Yellowjackets added the proverbial nail in the coffin in the 70th minute as Boston Caruthers netted a penalty kick into the lower left corner, just beyond the outstretched arms of Smith while giving the guests a three-goal lead.

The Black Knights did, however, get rewarded for their persistence as Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy had a rebound land on his foot, then the sophomore buried a shot into the back of the net on the low left side with 5.4 seconds left in regulation — wrapping up the 3-1 outcome.

Williamstown held a 23-6 shot advantage at the time of its first goal, which included a 10-3 edge on goal.

In discussing the events of the night afterwards, PPHS third-year coach Chip Wood noted that he would have tried some different tactics if the game was to be played again.

But, as he noted, Thursday night in no way took away from what the Black Knights had accomplished this year. In fact, it may only make them better moving forward.

"Williamstown has some good athletes over there and they have a ton of seniors. They have a lot of experience and they play at a high rate of speed, and we've not had to play at that rate of speed all season," Wood said. "I really felt that we could build more of an attack against those guys than we did, but this one is on me because we could have relieved more of the pressure they were putting on us. If we would have cleared and built from the middle of the field instead of working from the back, it may have been totally different for our kids.

"That said, we have pretty much everybody coming back next year and this does add a little extra motivation for these guys. We are looking forward to what we can accomplish next year. At the same time, this season was a terrific surprise for everyone — winning 17 games for the first time since 1994 — and I couldn't be prouder of what these guys accomplished this fall. We know where we need to go with this moving forward, so we still have a lot of work to put in between now and next fall."

Williamstown claimed a 7-4 edge in corner kicks and was also whistled for 11 of the 20 fouls in the contest — including two of the three yellow cards issued in the match.

Smith made a dozen stops in net for the Black Knights, while Baylor Haught stopped six shots in goal for the Yellowjackets. Grant Bobbitt also made one sliding save for WHS on an Adam Veroski shot attempt early in the first half.

Point lands 3 on state soccer teams

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — A memorable year. A memorable postseason.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer program netted three selections on the 2018 West Virginia Sports Writers Association all-state soccer teams in Class AA-A, as voted on by a panel of media members throughout the Mountaineer State.

The Black Knights ended the fall with a 17-3 overall mark and earned the top seed in the Class AA-A Region 4, Section 1 tournament.

For those efforts, the Red and Black came away with a pair of second team selections and a honorable mention choice.

Sophomores Alberto Castillo and Adam Veroski were both second team honorees as utility choices, while junior Peyton Hughes was chosen to the honorable mention list.

Castillo — a forward — became the first player in PPHS history with 20 goals and 20 assists in the same season, netting 23 goals and handing out 20 assists overall.

Veroski — also a forward — buried 21 goals in net and also dished out a pair of assists. Hughes — a center defender — had a single goal and two assists on the year.

This year was the first time since 1989 that the Black Knights had two 20-goal scorers in the same season. All three selection are first-time honorees on the WWSWA all-state squad.

Khori Miles of Robert C. Byrd was the first team captain, while Tucker Newell of Charleston Catholic was named the second team captain.

Castillo and Hughes were also both named first team on the All-Region IV team chosen by the WWHSSCA. Veroski, sophomore Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy and junior Garrett Hatten were also named second team recipients by the coaches in Region IV.

2018 WWSWA Class AA/A boys soccer teams

First Team

Forwards: Zander Schmitt, Nitro; Jacob Estep, Wheeling Central; Khori Miles, Robert C. Byrd (captain); Boston Caruthers, Williamstown.

Midfielders: Evan McCray, Winfield; Aiden Slusser, East Fairmont; Jack Cimino, Charleston Catholic; Tristan Nolte, Bridgeport,.

Defenders: Evan Garrett, East Fairmont; Justin Mayfield, Nitro; Michael Hoffman, Charleston Catholic,; Philip Englund, Winfield.

Keeper: Ethan Malinoski, Charleston Catholic.

Utility: Lance Cerullo, East Fairmont; Eli Williams, Robert C. Byrd; Andrew Mahairas, Nitro.

Second Team

Forwards: Corey Fluharty, East Fairmont; Briar Cessna, Frankfort; Gabe Turak, Trinity; Michael Watkins, Herbert Hoover.

Midfielders: Michael Floyd, Fairmont Senior; Coen Preston, Winfield; Jonas Branch, Fairmont Senior; Thomas Minor, Wheeling Central.

Defenders: Tucker Newell, Charleston Catholic (captain); Tanner Dodd, Robert C. Byrd; Wilson Meeks, Charleston Catholic; Matt Wright, Oak Glen.

Keeper: Jacob Clark, Oak Glen.

Utility: Alberto Castillo, Point Pleasant; Ryan Shrewsbury, Winfield; Adam Veroski, Point Pleasant.

Honorable Mention

Kolton Alderman, Pocahontas County; Ethan Anderson, Petersburg; Anthony Atchison, Lewis County; Gage Bailey, Oak Glen; Jack Barnett, Trinity; Bryson Beaver, Herbert Hoover; Eric Bevil, Shady Spring; Gavin Bosgraf, Williamstown; Marcus Breckenbridge, James Monroe; John Campbell, Herbert Hoover; Braden Crews, Bluefield; Briar Cessna, Frankfort; Gage Damewood, PikeView; Dan Dwoskin, Oak Glen; Brennan Elliott, Petersburg; Dylan Galford, James Monroe; Devyn Gillespie, Frankfort; Fletcher Hartsock, Trinity; Jaxson Haynes, Sissonville; Chase Howell, Liberty; Peyton Hughes, Point Pleasant; Andrew Komorowski, Wheeling Central; Zach Lamb, Chapmanville; Nathan Lanham, Winfield; Noah Luikart, Poca; Alex Magruder, Wheeling Central; Ian Mitchell, Bluefield; Grant Older, Scott; Zeb Pinson, Huntington St. Joe; Zack Placer, Tyler Consolidated; Marc Sauno, Independence; Hunter Shafer, Pocahontas County; Wil Swan, Charleston Catholic; Kobey Taylor-Williams, PikeView; Jackson Vanscoy, Winfield; Jacob Warrick, Weir.

Black Knights tie Pikeview, 1-1

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

Point Pleasant senior Cohen Yates battles for possession during the second half of Friday night's non-conference match against Pikeview at OVB Field in Point Pleasant, W.Va.

Bryan Walters|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — A lot of work to end up even.

Senior Garrett Hatten snapped Point Pleasant's scoring drought in the 65th minute and the Black Knights ultimately ended their season opener with a one-all tie against visiting Pikeview on Friday night in a non-conference match at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The host Black Knights (0-0-2) found themselves in an 80-minute battle as the Panthers fought tooth-and-nail in the opener, which included the game's first goal in the 32nd minute.

Kobey Taylor-Williams received a crossing pass on the left side of the goal and planted the ball in the back of the net for a 1-0 cushion with 8:08 left in the opening half.

PPHS held a 7-4 advantage in total shots at the intermission, as well as a 4-3 edge in shots on goal.

The intensity elevated in the second half, but neither squad was able to break through for an additional score entering the 60th minute.

Things became a bit chippy over the final 20 minutes as both squads earned a yellow card in the span of 90 seconds, with Hatten's goal coming in between those warnings.

While chasing down a free ball on the right side, Hatten booted the ball to the low left side and found the back of the net on a breakaway — tying the game at one with 15:26 remaining in regulation.

The Black Knights outshot the guests by an 18-10 overall margin, including a 9-7 edge in shots on goal. Both teams also had two corner kicks apiece in the contest.

Nick Smith made six saves in net for PPHS, while Dylan Blake stopped eight shots in goal for the Panthers.

Point Pleasant followed Friday's tie by going through 80 scoreless minutes on Saturday during a 0-0 outcome at Shady Spring.

The Black Knights travel to Lincoln County on Tuesday and return home Thursday when they welcome Poca for a non-conference friendly. Both contests are slated to start at 6 p.m.

Black Knights blank Lincoln County, 4-0

SPORTS

By Alex Hawley - ahawley@aimmediamidwest.com

HAMLIN, W.Va. — After 200 minutes of even play this fall, the Black Knights made the most of their next 40.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team claimed its first win of the season on Tuesday night at Lincoln County, finding the goal four times in the second half for a 4-0 victory over the host Panthers.

The Black Knights (1-0-2) — who had just one goal through their first two matches — broke the scoreless tie on Tuesday in the 55th minute, as Brooks Gilley found Adam Veroski near the left side post for a goal.

Just five minutes later, Veroski scored his second goal, finding the bottom right corner of the net, this time on an assist from Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy.

Veroski earned his hat trick in the 70th minute, giving the guests a 3-0 lead with an 18-yard shot off another assist from Watkins-Lovejoy.

The Black Knights put the finishing touches on their 4-0 victory in the 75th minute, as Garrett Hatten assisted Wyatt Edwards, who evaded a Lincoln County (0-2) defender before scoring from 12 yards out.

Picking up the shut out in goal for the Black Knights, Nick Smith saved all three shots that came his way. PPHS — which fired 35 shots in the contest — earned a 6-to-3 advantage in corner kicks.

Following the first win of the year, PPHS head coach Chip Wood commended his defense's back line, and noted his offense's early struggles against the LCHS defense.

"Defensively, our back line of Kaydean Eta, Peyton Hughes and Isaiah Snyder was outstanding at winning the ball and getting the offense started," Wood said. "Tyson Richards and Peyton Murphy platooned in the other back line spot and played well.

"We are just having trouble finishing the ball in the offensive third. We controlled possession probably like 70 minutes to 10 minutes, but they stayed deep on defense and we couldn't break through. Finally, we changed up our runs at their back line and gaps started to open."

PPHS will try for its third shut out in a row when it hosts Poca on Thursday.

Black Knights blank Poca, 3-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — It's palindromic ... and a little ironic too.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team posted its third consecutive shutout while picking up its second straight victory on Thursday night following a 3-0 decision over visiting Poca in a non-conference matchup at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The Black Knights (2-0-2) remained unbeaten and have now gone a shade over 288 minutes without allowing a goal, yet the hosts have wins in only half of their outings thus far this season.

The Red and Black built a 1-0 lead at the intermission, thanks to a goal by junior Adam Veroski. The eventual game-winner came on a free kick from 20 yards out that ultimately landed in the right side of the net for a 1-0 advantage.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy found Veroski with a perfect through ball between defenders, and Veroski ran past the defenders to get to the ball on the right side. With a one-on-one opportunity, Veroski slotted the ball to the far left post and found the net for a 2-0 edge in the 48th minute.

Cohen Yates completed the scoring in the 60th minute after receiving a pass from Isaiah Snyder in a left side gap, then dribbled the ball to within six yards of the goal before firing his successful shot attempt inside the far right post.

Point Pleasant claimed a substantial 22-4 advantage in total shots, including an 18-4 edge in shots on goal. The hosts also claimed a 6-1 advantage in corner kicks.

Nick Smith recorded his third consecutive shutout in net for PPHS with four saves.

The Red and Black have outscored opponents by an 8-1 overall margin in four games, with all but one of those goals coming in this current two-game winning streak.

The Black Knights return to action Tuesday when they travel to Gallia Academy for a 7 p.m. contest.

Black Knights nip Gallia Academy, 2-1

SPORTS

By Alex Hawley - ahawley@aimmediamidwest.com

CENTENARY, Ohio — The Battle of the Bridge decided on a bounce back.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team claimed a 2-1 victory over non-conference host Gallia Academy on Tuesday night at Lester Field, with PPHS junior Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy scoring the go-ahead goal on a rebound.

The Black Knights (3-0-2) — winners of three straight decisions — claimed the opening goal of the match in the 18th minute, with Garrett Hatten assisting Adam Veroski.

The Blue Devils (1-3-1) — losing two players to red cards, one in each half — tied the match at 1-1 with just 41 seconds left in the first half, with Carson Wamsley assisting Brody Wilt.

The guests scored the winning goal in the 55th minute of the contest, with Watkins-Lovejoy firing the caromed ball into the back of the net.

In the 2-1 victory, Point Pleasant launched 15 shots, 10 of which were on goal. GAHS sent 21 shots, 10 of which were on goal.

Nick Smith claimed nine saves in goal for the Black Knights, while Bryson Miller earned eight saves for the hosts.

Next, GAHS will welcome Fairland to Lester Field for an Ohio Valley Conference match on Thursday, while PPHS will host Herbert Hoover on Saturday.

Point, Huskies battle through 0-0 draw

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Still unbeaten, but the winning streak is over.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team had its three-game winning streak come to an end on Saturday following a scoreless draw against visiting Herbert Hoover in a non-conference match at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The Black Knights (3-0-3) recorded their fourth shutout of the season, and the hosts did so with a variety of fresh faces on the field.

Due to injuries and other commitments, the Red and Black were forced to use six freshmen — five of whom started — for significant portions of the contest.

Despite a nearly 3-to-1 ratio in time of possession, PPHS just couldn't get anything to go in the net. The hosts claimed a 12-2 advantage in shots, but were also whistled for nine of the dozen fouls in the contest.

The Huskies also posted a 6-3 edge in corner kicks.

Hunter Bonecutter came up with two stops in goal for the Black Knights, who have allowed just two goals in six contests this fall.

Point Pleasant returns to action Tuesday when it travels to Scott for a non-conference friendly at 6 p.m.

Skyhawks hand Point 1st loss, 1-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

MADISON, W.Va. — This third time wasn't a charm.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team surrendered its third goal of the season on Tuesday night, but that singular goal proved to be difference-maker as host Scott claimed a 1-0 victory in a non-conference matchup in Boone County.

The visiting Black Knights (3-1-3) suffered their first loss of the 2019 campaign as the Skyhawks — the top-ranked Class AA-A team in the state — broke a scoreless tie in the second half as Carson Asbury found the back of the net from six yards out.

SHS had a throw-in from the right side of the field, which happened to find Asbury deep in Point Pleasant territory. With his back to the goal, Asbury flipped the ball up over his head and launched a successful shot into the goal — making it a 1-0 contest.

The Skyhawks outshot the guests by an 8-3 overall margin and were also whistled for five of the nine fouls in the match. Both teams had three corner kicks apiece.

PPHS was still not at full strength as it started five freshmen due to injuries.

It was a tough night, according to Point Pleasant coach Chip Wood, but there were also a handful of bright spots against the top team in the state.

"We lacked effort and pace in the first 20 to 25 minutes, and Scott was attacking at full speed and creating chances all game. Some of our younger players looked young against Scott and we weren't able to create any dangerous chances," Wood said. "We made some adjustments in the second half and managed to control the ball a bit more, but we just can't find the goal right now. Hopefully we can take something from this game and get on track against Charleston Catholic."

Point Pleasant has now played 105 minutes of regulation since scoring its last goal against Gallia Academy on Sept. 5.

The Black Knights return to action Thursday when they travel to Class AA-A second-ranked Charleston Catholic for a 6 p.m. contest.

Irish roll past Point Pleasant, 6-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — No luck needed for these Irish.

Host Charleston Catholic scored three goals in each half while handing the Point Pleasant boys soccer team its second consecutive loss on Thursday night during a 6-0 non-conference decision at Schoenbaum Field.

The Black Knights (3-2-3) were simply overmatched as the Irish (6-0) outshot the guests by a sizable 20-3 overall margin. CCHS — the second-ranked team in Class AA-A — also had four different players score goals over the course of the match.

Will Swan gave the Green and White a quick 2-0 lead after consecutive goals in the 10th and 17th minutes, then David Kershner added a goal in the 25th minute for a 3-0 intermission advantage.

Zion Suddeth increased the lead to four with a goal in the 50th minute, then Liam McGinley made it a 5-0 contest with a goal in the 60th minute. Suddeth added the final goal in the 75th minute.

Charleston Catholic claimed an 8-0 advantage in corner kicks and both squads were called for three fouls apiece. Adam Patnoe made three saves in net for CCHS to secure the shutout.

"We were just outmatched tonight. Catholic has a very good side and they are definitely the best team we've seen this year," PPHS coach Chip Wood said afterwards. "The good thing is that we learned a lot about who we are and what we need to do better to be more successful. I'm not happy with the result, but hopefully this will help us understand what we need to do better and we can start to improve on the season."

The Black Knights — who have now been held scoreless in their last three contests — return to action Tuesday when they travel to the Kennedy YMCA fields to face Huntington Saint Joseph at 6 p.m.

Point battles to 1-1 draw at St. Joe

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. — Some good signs in this draw.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team snapped a 2-game losing skid and scored the first goal in four games on Tuesday night during a 1-1 tie against host Huntington Saint Joseph in a non-conference matchup in Cabell County.

The Black Knights (3-2-4) wasted little time getting on the scoreboard as Adam Veroski dribbled between two defenders and unleashed a shot from 25 yards out. The ball curved and dipped just under the cross bar on the upper right side, giving the guests a 1-0 lead in the third minute of play.

The score remained that way until late in the second half as Stewart Perry mimicked Veroski's goal in the 74th minute, only Perry's score went in on the upper left side of the net.

St. Joe — the No. 6 ranked team in Class AA-A — outshot the Red and Black by a 13-11 overall margin, with Point Pleasant claiming an 8-6 edge in corner kicks.

Nick Smith made a dozen stops in net for the Black Knights.

"Overall, we played much better than we had been of late," PPHS coach Chip Wood said afterwards. "St. Joe has a good program and they very disciplined. Nick played out of his mind in goal tonight and made some amazing stops that kept us in the game. This was probably one of our better performances this year."

Point Pleasant returns to action Thursday when it hosts Teays Valley Christian at 5:30 p.m.

Black Knights blast TVCS, 8-1

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Exactly what the doctor ordered.

After scoring just three goals in its previous five contests, the Point Pleasant soccer team was able to secure its first victory in over two weeks on Thursday night with an impressive 8-1 decision over visiting Teays Valley Christian in a non-conference matchup at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The Black Knights (4-2-4) celebrated Senior Night by honoring Kaydean Eta, Garrett Hatten, Peyton Hughes, Zach Rediger, Nick Smith, Isaiah Snyder, Cohen Yates and Sondre Folvik for their collective contributions over the years, then followed by snapping a five-match winless skid after churning out a season-high in goals.

The Red and Black put on an offensive display as the hosts had five different players score goals while outshooting the Lions (4-6-0) by an overwhelming 43-8 overall margin, which included a 23-3 advantage at the break.

The Black Knights also posted a sizable 30-3 advantage in shots on goal — including a 15-1 edge before the intermission — while scoring the first seven goals of the game.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy started the scoring barrage in the 10th minute after netting a pass from Hatten. Hatten dribbled between defenders and centered a pass that found Watkins-Lovejoy in the front of the net at point blank range, then Watkins-Lovejoy booted the ball from the right to the left side of net for an early 1-0 edge.

Adam Veroski followed with a score roughly two minutes later as he nailed a header in front of the right side of the goal. The goal was set up by a corner kick from Watkins-Lovejoy, making it a 2-0 contest.

Hatten tacked on the final goal of the first half after Veroski tracked down a free ball on the left side, then crossed a pass that found Hatten five yards away from the right side of the goal. Hatten buried the shot into the back of the net for a 3-0 cushion in the 38th minute.

Hatten added his second goal of the night while starting the second half scoring in the 45th minute. Hatten slipped through two defenders in front of the net and buried a shot in the back left side from 10 yards out — increasing the lead to 4-0.

Watkins-Lovejoy followed with his second goal in the 48th minute, one that was set up on a corner kick from Caden Barger on the right side. Barger launched the pass and Watkins-Lovejoy came in uncontested on the right side of the net, then nailed the shot into the back right of the goal for a 5-0 cushion.

Veroski added his second goal in an unassisted fashion during the 70th minute as the junior collected the ball in front of the net, then fired a 20-yard blast that trickled in on the left side for a six-goal advantage.

Hatten worked the ball down to the end line and centered a pass out to Hughes in front of the goal, who then buried the shot in stride while making it a 7-0 contest in the 74th minute.

TVCS, however, finally managed to get on the scoreboard a minute later as Cole Young buried a breakaway chance for a 7-1 score with 5:18 left in regulation.

The final goal of the game came from Eta, who managed to wiggle through two defenders after tracking down a loose ball in front of the goal. Eta fired the shot with his left foot to the right side and found the net with 30 seconds left, wrapping up the seven-goal triumph.

After the game, PPHS coach Chip Wood was more than pleased to see some offensive efficiency that reflected itself on the scoreboard.

"Things were finally starting to click a little bit offensively and we were just making all of the right decisions. It just seemed that every decision we made tonight was the right decision," Wood said. "The execution wasn't always perfect, but we were still making the right decisions that led to a lot of good opportunities. Half the battle is getting the ball into dangerous positions and we were able to do that all night long. This was a result that we really needed."

The fourth-year mentor was also happy that his upperclassmen were able to have a night like this to remember.

"Those seniors are one of the few classes that absolutely bought into what we do from day one as freshmen," Wood said. "They have done everything that we have asked of them for four years, and that is what has allowed us to get this program turned back around and make it a success. It was a fitting Senior Night for that group of young men."

Hatten led the hosts with two assists to go along with his two goals, while Watkins-Lovejoy, Veroski and Barger also added an assist apiece.

Smith stopped two shots in goal for the Black Knights, who also had five shot attempts hit either the cross bar or a post. Devin Danford made 17 saves in net for the Lions.

Point Pleasant claimed a 7-2 advantage in corner kicks and was also whistled for four of the six fouls in the contest.

The Black Knights return to action Saturday when they host Williamstown in a non-conference friendly at 1 p.m.

Black Knights battle Williamstown to scoreless draw

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — They might need more business suits, because the Black Knights have enough ties for every day of the work week.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team participated in its fifth draw of the season on Saturday during a 0-0 outcome against visiting Williamstown in a non-conference friendly at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The Black Knights (4-2-5) participated in their third scoreless tie of the season as the hosts once again were unable to find the back of the net, despite a 15-1 advantage in shot attempts.

The Red and White, however, were really good at producing quality shot attempts — particularly ones that bounced off either the cross bar or the side posts.

Peyton Murphy played a cross from the end line with 12 minutes left and Cohen Yates ran onto it, but the shot banged off the post from about three feet away.

Kanaan Abbas slipped through the defense and produced a shot from within the goal area that hit the right post with five minutes left, and Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy blasted a shot from 25 yards out that hit the top left corner of the goal just before time expired.

Watkins-Lovejoy sent a ball from the left to the right side, which found Garrett Hatten in stride. Hatten managed to put the ball in the net, but the goal was waived off due to an offside call.

Point Pleasant claimed a 6-1 edge in corner kicks, while the Yellowjackets were whistled for eight of the 13 fouls in the match. Nick Smith made a single save in net for Point Pleasant on a free kick from 40 yards out.

"We absolutely controlled the ball and the pace of the game. We had a lot of chances in dangerous areas by their goal and couldn't finish any of them," PPHS coach Chip Wood said afterwards. "We played well and we made a lot of good decisions, but we just can't seem to find the right final pass to get in on goal. Defensively, we were very strong in limiting their opportunities because they might have had the ball in our defensive third maybe six times. It was a good effort on our part, we just couldn't score."

Point Pleasant returns to action on Tuesday when it travels to St. Marys for a non-conference contest at 7 p.m.

Point Pleasant grinds past Grizzlies, 3-0

SPORTS

By Alex Hawley - ahawley@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — A dominant day at home.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team claimed a 3-0 victory over non-conference guest Nicholas County on Saturday at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field, with the Black Knights out shooting the Grizzlies by a 31-to-8 count.

Point Pleasant (5-2-5) broke the scoreless tie in the 28th minute of play, as Kayden Eta scored an unassisted goal, after collecting a rebound and firing a shot toward the right post.

Just three minutes into the second half, PPHS went up 2-0, with Kanaan Abbas scoring his first varsity goal. Abbas' goal came from point-blank range on the left side after a long pass from Adam Veroski.

Veroski added the final goal of the night in the 65th minute, blasting an up-close shot over the Nicholas County (4-7) goal keeper after an assist from Colton Young.

Of Point Pleasant's 31 shots, 20 were on goal. The Grizzlies were accurate on six of their eight shot attempts, with PPHS goal keeper Hunter Bonecutter stopping all-6 shots to preserve the team's sixth shut out of the year. The Black Knights also claimed a 12-to-1 edge in corner kicks in the win.

Following the 3-0 victory, Point Pleasant head coach Chip Wood talked his squad's aggressiveness on offense, but noted that they still have to work on finishing.

"I think the 95-degree heat after a rainy morning took a lot out of both teams," Wood said. "But, we played under control and worked the ball well. We put the ball in dangerous positions all game. Within the first 90 seconds we had 3-or-4 dangerous situations that all ended with good shots at goal. We kept them pressed into their defensive half the entire game.

"Hunter Bonecutter played outstanding in goal, making a few saves to keep the shut out. Our outside backs were really active and combined for 10 crosses into the box. Everybody got to play, and for the most part we played smart. I feel like we still have a lot of work to do on the finishing aspect, but the build up to the finish is being played out well."

The Black Knights return to action on Tuesday at Ironton St. Joseph.

Flyers double up Point, 4-2

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

IRONTON, Ohio — A rare night when almost everything goes right ... and it still isn't enough.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team dominated the stat sheets, but host Ironton Saint Joseph ended up on the right side of a 4-2 victory Tuesday night in a non-conference matchup in Lawrence County.

The Black Knights (5-3-5) outshot the Flyers by a 20-7 overall margin, which included a 13-6 advantage on attempts at the net. The guests also secured an 8-2 edge in corner kicks.

ISJHS (11-2) built a 3-0 first half lead before Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy managed to get Point Pleasant on the scoreboard, with some help from Garrett Hatten.

Hatten beat a defender to the end line, cut it back to the middle and fired a pass across the box that found Watkins-Lovejoy on the right side from six yards away. The junior planted his shot attempt in the 38th minute while cutting the halftime deficit down to 3-1.

The Purple and Gold managed an early second half goal to push the lead back out to three, but PPHS countered in the 60th minute as Adam Veroski headed in a pass from Caden Barger just inside the crossbar for a 4-2 deficit.

It was Point's first loss in five outings, while the Flyers moved to 9-0 in non-conference matches. Hunter Bonecutter made two stops in net for the Black Knights.

"This was hands down the most frustrating game I've coached since I started coaching in 1997," PPHS frontman Chip Wood said. "We controlled the pace, we passed the ball well and we put the ball in dangerous spots. We defended well in 1-on-1 situations, but we didn't do a very good job of marking runners in our defensive goal area.

"At one point, Saint Joe had four shots and four goals. All four came on crosses from the right side, and all four were from within six yards of our goal. It's frustrating to have so much possession and so many chances, but things just worked in their favor."

Point Pleasant returns to action Thursday when it hosts Belpre in a non-conference match at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field at 6 p.m.

Black Knights blast Belpre, 7-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

Point Pleasant junior Adam Veroski (7) surveys the field as teammate Nic Matheny, right, looks on during the second half of Thursday night's boys soccer match against Belpre at OVB Field in Point Pleasant, W.Va.

Bryan Walters|OVP Sports

Point Pleasant freshman Tyson Richards launches a crossing pass during the second half of Thursday night's boys soccer match against Belpre at OVB Field in Point Pleasant, W.Va. (Bryan Walters|OVP Sports)

Bryan Walters|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — There were no lids on the goal boxes Thursday night ... at least not for the Black Knights.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team posted its seventh shutout of the season while also matching its largest margin of victory this fall with a 7-0 decision over visiting Belpre in a non-conference friendly at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The Black Knights (6-3-5) led 2-0 seven minutes into regulation and doubled that lead out to four by the 19th minute, then the hosts tacked on two more scores for a sizable 6-0 cushion entering the intermission.

The Red and Black completed the scoring two minutes into the second half before substituting most of its bench to complete the game.

Point Pleasant outshot the Golden Eagles (4-9) by a 20-5 overall margin, which included a 15-3 edge in shots on goal. The hosts had all three corner kicks in the contest.

The scoring started in the sixth minute as Jaden Reed made his way to the end line, then sent pass over to Adam Veroski. Veroski made a pair of quick moves and launched an 18-yarder into the back of the net for a permanent lead.

Garrett Hatten followed up a minute later by dribbling around a defender on the outside and found the roof of the net for a quick 2-0 advantage.

Veroski made it a 3-0 contest in the 18th minute after controlling a rebound and blasting a quick shot from 20 yards away.

Cohen Yates followed with a goal in the 19th minute after dribbling straight to the goal for 20 yards before unleashing a shot into the lower right corner, making it a 4-0 contest.

Colton Young found the lower portion of the net in the 27th minute after the BHS keeper missed a deflected ball that ended up on the foot of Young. From point-blank range, Young gave the hosts a 5-0 lead.

Young picked up a second goal two minutes later, with an assist going to Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy. Watkins-Lovejoy provided a perfect through ball that found Young in stride, then Young went to the high left side of the net for a 6-0 cushion.

Luke Pinkerton completed the scoring in the 42nd minute, with an assist going to Young on the play. Young launched a 30-yard free kick toward the goal, and Pinkerton ran the ball down before heading it into the upper right corner for a 7-0 advantage.

Pinkerton and Hunter Bonecutter combined in net for the Point Pleasant shutout. Bonecutter stopped one shot in 60 minutes of play, while Pinkerton made two saves in the final fourth of the match.

"This game was the complete opposite of Tuesday at Ironton Saint Joseph. We had some great looks on goal and we were able to finish them into the net. We played smart, we moved the ball really well and we were good in our attack," Wood said. "We did a good job of finishing tonight, and hopefully that will carry over into our upcoming games. We need to keep producing some offensive momentum."

Point Pleasant traveled to Sissonville on Saturday and returns to action Tuesday when it hosts Huntington for a non-conference match at 6 p.m.

Black Knights rally past Sissonville, 4-3

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

SISSONVILLE, W.Va. — Goals when they were needed most.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team let a 2-1 halftime lead slip away, but junior Adam Veroski scored with 27 seconds left in regulation en route to a thrilling 4-3 victory over host Sissonville on Saturday in a non-conference friendly in Kanawha County.

The visiting Black Knights (7-3-5) stormed out to a 2-goal advantage in the first eight minutes of play, but the Indians (10-4-1) rallied for three consecutive scores while building their only lead with 25 minutes remaining.

In the 65th minute, however, freshman Colton Young managed to knot things up at three on a run-in shot from the front.

Entering the final minute, Veroski collected a loose ball dead center from 23 yards out. He touched the ball to the right side and drove a shot to the left corner — which found the net for a 4-3 advantage in the 90th minute.

"We played outstanding soccer for the first 15 minutes and the last 25 minutes, and we looked very composed and dangerous during that 40-minute span," PPHS coach Chip Wood said afterwards. "We played with purpose and passion today, and it worked itself out in the end. This is a very good win for us at this point the season."

The Black Knights outshot the hosts by a 15-13 overall margin, with both squads putting 10 shots apiece on goal. Point also claimed a 4-2 edge in corner kicks and was whistled for 20 of the 28 fouls called.

Garrett Hatten gave the guests a 1-0 lead in the 4th minute after playing a pass from Cohen Yates into the right corner post, then Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy volleyed a crossing pass from Hatten into the net for a 2-0 cushion eight minutes into regulation.

SHS closed the deficit in half as Jaxson Haynes headed in a pass from Wyatt Ervin in the 20th minute, making it a 2-1 contest headed into the intermission.

Sissonville tied things a minute into the second half as Haynes blasted a left-to-right shot past Hunter Bonecutter, then Ervin scored on a drop pass from 20 yards out — giving the Indians a 3-2 lead in the 45th minute.

Point Pleasant — which has won two straight and 3-of-4 overall — returns to action Tuesday when it hosts Huntington in a non-conference contest at 6 p.m.

Black Knights blank Huntington, 4-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Peaking at just the right time.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team remained unbeaten at home and matched a season-best 3-game winning streak on Tuesday night with a decisive 4-0 victory over visiting Huntington in a non-conference friendly at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The Black Knights (8-3-5) posted their eighth shutout of the season while improving to 5-0-3 in the friendly confines of OVB Field. It was also the second shutout during the Red and Black's current 3-game winning streak.

The Highlanders (7-8-4) kept things very competitive in the first half, but Point Pleasant managed to come away with the only goal in the 37th minute. Garrett Hatten finished a perfect pass from Adam Veroski into the back of an empty net for a 1-0 edge headed into the intermission.

Veroski tacked on a hat trick in the second half, and each goal was unique in its own way.

The first score came in the 42nd minute as Veroski drove from left to right into the middle of the HHS defense. The junior managed to find a small crease near midfield and hammered a shot in the low right side of the goal.

Brooks Gilley assisted on the next goal by finding Veroski with a pass on the left side, then Veroski pushed the ball right toward the goal before left-footing his shot attempt into the right side for a 3-0 edge in the 52nd minute.

Veroski's final goal came on a penalty kick in the 72nd minute.

The Black Knights played, perhaps, their finest 80 minutes of the regular season. They also made the most of some very limited opportunities.

Point Pleasant outshot the Green and Gold by a 10-8 overall margin, including a 6-4 edge in shots on goal. HHS did claim a 5-1 advantage in corner kicks and both teams were whistled for five fouls apiece.

"We played 80 minutes of focused, purpose-driven soccer tonight. The boys followed every instruction and stayed composed throughout the match. They executed every aspect of the game that we have trained for the past couple of weeks perfectly," PPHS coach Chip Wood said afterward. "Huntington plays a tough schedule and is battled tested, so to come in and play organized and disciplined tonight was really key in this outcome. It's the first time we've beaten Huntington in three years, and the boys really stepped it up tonight."

Nick Smith made four saves in net for the Black Knights.

Point Pleasant returns to action Saturday when it travels to Shady Spring for a non-conference contest at 1 p.m.

Black Knights blank Shady Spring, 2-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — A progressive effort.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team scored a goal in each half and notched a season-best fourth consecutive victory Saturday afternoon with a 2-0 decision over visiting Shady Spring in a non-conference matchup at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The Black Knights (9-3-5) remained unbeaten at OVB Field in nine contests (6-0-3) as the hosts struck early, then provided a defensive gem that held up until adding an insurance goal with just over two minutes left in regulation.

PPHS battled through a scoreless draw in its first matchup with the Tigers back on Aug. 24.

Garrett Hatten dribbled past a defender to the end line, then crossed the ball across the face of the goal from the right side. Adam Veroski ran the ball down on the left side and finished a shot at the low left post, giving the Red and Black a 1-0 lead in the ninth minute.

The goal, coincidentally, was the 50th career score for Veroski, a junior and 3-year starter.

The 1-0 advantage ended up holding up into intermission and beyond, with the hosts eventually doubling their cushion in the 78th minute.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy picked up a rebound about 19 yards away from the goal and fired a shot inside the low post for a 2-0 lead.

The Black Knights outshot the guests by a 20-4 overall margin, including a 14-3 advantage in shots on goal. Point Pleasant also had three of the five corners kicks, while both programs were called for three fouls apiece.

Nick Smith stopped three shots in goal for PPHS. Erick Bevil made a dozen stops in net for SSHS.

Point Pleasant — which has three shutouts while outscoring opponents 17-3 during its current 4-game winning streak — returns to action Tuesday when it travels to Capital for a 6 p.m. contest.

Black Knights top Capital, 3-1

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — A really good road win.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team notched its fifth consecutive victory and moved over the .500 mark in road contests Tuesday night with a 3-1 decision over host Capital in a non-conference friendly in Kanawha County.

The Black Knights (10-3-5) built a 1-0 halftime lead and were up by as many as two goals with 18 minutes left in regulation, but the Cougars (6-11-2) did manage to knot things up early in the second half.

The Red and Black — who finish the regular season with a 4-3-2 road mark — took their first lead in the 38th minute as Adam Veroski collected a corner kick in front of the net.

The junior gathered possession, made a quick move and fired a shot from 18 yards out into the left side goal for a 1-0 intermission edge.

Capital's only goal came in the 53rd minute on a rebound in front of PPHS keeper Nick Smith.

Garrett Hatten made it a permanent lead in the 58th minute as the senior ran down a forward pass that managed to draw the CHS keeper out of the net area.

Hatten got to the ball first and, from 20 yards out, tapped it over the head of the Capital keeper before running it down again to finish the open goal.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy gave PPHS its biggest lead of the match in the 62nd minute as the junior netted a 30-yard free kick past the outstretched hands of the keeper, making it a 3-1 advantage.

The Black Knights outshot the hosts by a 12-10 overall margin, but the Cougars did manage an 8-6 edge in shots on goal. CHS also claimed an 8-6 advantage in corner kicks.

Smith made six saves in goal for Point Pleasant, while Luke Pinkerton also made a stop in the his eight minutes in net.

OVB Field will host both the semifinals and the championship match of the 2019 Class AA-A Region IV boys soccer tournament next week. The top-seeded Black Knights face the winner of the Nitro-Ravenswood contest at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 22.

Point Pleasant completes its regular season schedule on Saturday when it welcomes Ravenswood at 11 a.m.

Black Knights roll past Ravenswood, 7-2

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Looking good at just the right time.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team concluded its 2019 regular season campaign on Saturday with an impressive 7-2 victory over visiting Ravenswood in a non-conference matchup at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The Black Knights (11-3-5) picked up its season-best sixth consecutive victory while closing out the home portion of their schedule with an unbeaten mark (7-0-3) at OVB Field.

The Red and Black — who have outscored opponents by a 27-6 margin over the last six matches — needed only one minute to secure a permanent lead as Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy slipped a ball through the middle of the defense.

Adam Veroski tracked down the ball for a successful 1-on-1 conversion against the keeper for a quick 1-0 edge. Veroski tacked on a score with a penalty kick in the 25th minute.

Kanaan Abbas received a through ball from Watkins-Lovejoy in front of the net during the 30th minute. Abbas was able to beat the keeper in a 1-on-1 fashion, allowing PPHS to secure a 3-0 advantage headed into the intermission.

Veroski completed his hat trick in the 50th minute after taking a penalty kick on a play that Garrett Hatten was fouled on inside the box. Veroski's final score of the game made it a 4-0 contest.

Abbas ran down a crossing pass from Cohen Yates and scored in the 60th minute, then Abbas played a through ball to Nic Matheny. Matheny unleashed a shot from 19 yards out and beat the keeper near post for a 6-0 lead in the 65th minute.

Matheny completed Point's offensive tally in the 68th minute after Sean Wilson left a free ball from about 25 yards away. Matheny again beat the keeper near post for a 7-goal cushion.

Seth Marra tacked on a pair of late goals in the 72nd and 75th minutes to wrap up the 7-2 outcome.

The Black Knights claimed a 15-8 advantage in shots, including a 10-6 edge on goal. The hosts had a 5-2 margin in corner kicks and were also whistled for five of the nine fouls in the game.

Nick Smith stopped four shots in goal for Point Pleasant.

Point Pleasant hosts the winner of the Ravenswood-Nitro contest on Tuesday night in a Class AA-A Region IV semifinal at 8 p.m.

Black Knights advance to finals

SPORTS

Point boys knock off Red Devils, face Sissonville Thursday

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — It's different in the postseason.

After posting a 7-2 win three days earlier in the regular season finale, the Point Pleasant boys soccer team had to rally back from an early deficit and ultimately held on Tuesday night for a 2-1 decision over fourth seeded Ravenswood in the semifinal round of the Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 tournament held at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The top seeded Black Knights (12-3-5) picked up their seventh consecutive victory in as many matches while also improving to 8-0-3 in the friendly confines of OVB Field this fall.

Midway through the first half, however, the Red Devils (10-8-1) had a little luck work in their favor.

Point Pleasant attempted the first seven shots of regulation, four of which ended up on goal — but the hosts had nothing to show for their efforts.

Shortly afterwards, RHS produced its first shot attempt before arriving at a free kick from around 30 yards out. Mason Butler bent the shot from right to left and found the upper half of the net for a 1-0 edge in the 22nd minute.

PPHS countered 10 minutes later as Adam Veroski netted a rebound from 10 yards away, forcing a 1-all tie headed into the intermission.

The Black Knights outshot the guests by a sizable 13-4 margin in the first half, but only managed 7-3 cushion in shots on goal. The hosts accounted for eight corner kicks in the first half and finished the night with all 16 corner kicks in the game.

Point Pleasant needed only two shot attempts in the second half to ultimately put the game away. Veroski ran down a perfect sideline pass from Brayden Randolph 10 yards away from the front and buried a shot into the low left side of the goal, giving PPHS a 2-1 lead with 36:57 left in regulation.

Things got a little hectic from that point, as each squad earned a yellow card over the next seven minutes of play.

Veroski also missed a hat trick chance after having a penalty kick blocked with 35 minutes left in regulation.

Ravenswood received a second yellow card with 8:04 remaining, setting up a free kick from 18 yards out.

Point huddled in front of the ball and released to the goal as Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy lobbed the ball so that it would bounce in front of the RHS keeper. Peyton Hughes ran down the bounce and buried the shot, but the goal was disallowed due to an offside call.

The Black Knights turned up the defensive intensity in the second half after outshooting the guests by a 17-1 overall margin, including a 12-1 edge in shots on goal.

Overall, Point claimed a 30-5 advantage in shots, including 19-4 on goal. Both teams were whistled for 10 fouls apiece, with the Red Devils amassing three of the four yellow cards in the game.

Nick Smith made three saves in goal for the Black Knights, who advance to face Sissonville in the championship match at 6:30 p.m. Thursday. The Indians defeated Williamstown by a 2-1 margin in the other semifinal at OVB Field Tuesday night.

Blake Bibbee stopped 15 shots in net for Ravenswood.

Notes: The Point Pleasant girls soccer team had its season end on Tuesday night following a 2-0 setback to host Sissonville in the semifinal round of the Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 tournament. SHS hosts Williamstown in the Section 1 final on Thursday. The Lady Knights finished the year with an 11-8-3 mark.

Black Knights win Section 1 title

SPORTS

Point Pleasant to host Class AA-A Region IV championship Tuesday

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

Bryan Walters|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — It might have been somewhat of a different road, but the Black Knights still managed to reach an ultimate destination.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team fulfilled a season-long quest to reach the regional finals after knocking off second seeded Sissonville 3-0 Thursday night in the Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 championship match held at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The top seeded Black Knights (13-3-5) notched the program's first Class AA-A Region IV title game appearance in eight years with their eighth consecutive victory, an outcome that also improved Point's unbeaten streak at home to 9-0-3 this fall.

PPHS picked up its 10th shutout of the season, including the seventh shutout to result in a victory. The hosts also managed to move on by being solid on all three levels of the field.

Point Pleasant outshot the Indians (16-6-1) by a 21-10 overall margin, which included an 11-7 edge in shots on goal.

More impressively, the Black Knights mustered a 12-4 shot advantage in the second half while clinging to a 1-0 halftime lead.

Both teams had a pair of decent chances result in nothing over the first 15 minutes of regulation, but Point's continued aggression eventually produced the game-winning goal in the 22nd minute.

Garrett Hatten received a long pass in stride from 30 yards out, made a touch to slip a defender and found himself in a 1-on-1 opportunity with SHS keeper Trevor Faber. Hatten successful went inside the low near post for a 1-0 advantage with 18:20 left in the opening half.

The Indians were held without a shot attempt for just over 12 minutes in the second half, but that first shot was a point blank attempt that PPHS keeper Nick Smith somehow managed to corral.

It proved to be Sissonville's final best chance to score ... and it led to Point finding some more offense.

Tyson Richards pitched a perfect sideline ball to the mid-goal area, a pass that eventually landed in stride with Adam Veroski. Veroski made a touch to the right and fired a shot to the left side from 12 yards out, allowing the hosts to secure a 2-0 cushion with 15:35 left in regulation.

Point Pleasant provided the proverbial nail in the coffin roughly a minute later as Veroski provided a pass to a streaking Hatten down the right side. Hatten touched right to split a defender and uncorked a shot to the left side from five yards away, making it a 3-goal lead with 14:08 remaining.

Point Pleasant will host the Class AA-A Region IV championship matches — both boys and girls — on Tuesday night. The girls final will start at 5 p.m., while the Black Knights will face the winner of the Winfield-Scott boys match in the night cap.

It is the first Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 championship for Point Pleasant since 2011, when Chip Wood was nearing the end of his first stint as head coach at PPHS.

Wood returned to guide the program four years ago, and this senior group is the first that Wood has had for four full years.

And, as the venerable mentor noted, that group of upperclassmen is one of the main reasons that the program is sitting where it is right now.

"I'm absolutely thrilled for the seniors. Those guys have put in so much time and effort over four years to get this program to this point, so they all deserve having this trophy come home to us," Wood said. "We handled this game really well today because our defense was dominant, our keeper was solid and our offense was opportunistic.

"I'm really thrilled for the kids to have another opportunity to play in a regional championship game. Being an alum, I'm proud too. We're just looking forward to playing at home on Tuesday night."

Point Pleasant claimed a 7-2 advantage in corner kicks and was also whistled for nine of the 15 fouls in the contest.

Smith made seven saves in goal for PPHS, while Faber stopped eight shots for Sissonville in the setback.

PPHS had high hopes entering the 2019 campaign, but started the season with only five wins in its first 13 matches (5-3-5) — mainly due to an unlucky inability to put goals in the net. In its five ties, Point managed only two goals and recorded three scoreless draws.

The Black Knights have churned out at least two goals in each of their last 10 contests, which has led to a 9-1-0 mark over that span.

Scott and Winfield play Saturday in the Region IV, Section 2 championship.

The Black Knights did not face Winfield this season and dropped a 1-0 decision at Scott back on Sept. 10.

Generals charge past Point, 4-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

Bryan Walters|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — According to the law of averages, this 13 was unprecedentedly unlucky.

Braxton Vanscoy scored a pair of goals in each half, allowing visiting Winfield to become the first road team to win at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field this fall while cruising to a 4-0 victory over the Point Pleasant boys soccer team in the Class AA-A Region IV championship match Tuesday night in Mason County.

The host Big Blacks (13-4-5) had their 8-game winning streak come to a halt as the Generals (19-1-4) produced three times as many shot attempts by night's end, including a quartet of goals from Vanscoy — three of which were unassisted.

The Green and White — the Section 2 champions — claimed a favorable 5-2 edge in shots in the opening half of play, and that pace allowed the guests to build a 2-0 lead entering the intermission.

"They played a much quicker game than what we had anticipated. We scouted them a couple of times, and the pace that we saw tonight was not what we saw," PPHS coach Chip Wood said afterwards. "We had some moments and some opportunities that didn't pan out, and we did what we wanted to do and what we've done over the last eight games of the season. Unfortunately, they were just perfect in front of our goal. They finished everything when they had chances and we just didn't have a counter for that tonight."

Vanscoy split two defenders in front of the goal and unleashed a point blank shot that successfully found the net at the 28:56 mark, giving WHS a permanent lead of 1-0.

The Red and Black followed with a missed chance as Adam Veroski sailed a shot from in front high in the 26th minute, easily Point's best shot attempt of the opening 40 minutes.

Winfield answered as Jackson Zulauf hit Vanscoy in stride with a pass in the 32nd minute, and Vanscoy caught the pass in front before firing away from point blank range for a 2-goal cushion just before the break.

Vanscoy's hat trick came in the 46th minute after tracking down a pass 10 yards out, then he made a move to his right before temporarily losing control of the ball.

Vanscoy outran two defenders to the free ball and somehow gathered possession long enough to rip off a shot — which ultimately found the net for a 3-0 advantage.

The final Vanscoy goal came in the 58th minute as he hauled in a goalie deflection and made a touch right, then fired back to the left side from inside 10 yards for a 4-goal lead with just over 20 minutes remaining.

Vanscoy did miss a chance at a fifth goal after firing wide right on a penalty kick with 13:18 left in regulation.

The Generals outshot the hosts on goal by a 9-3 overall margin and also had seven of the nine corner kicks in the contest. The Black Knights were whistled for 11 of the 20 fouls, plus both teams received a yellow card apiece.

Nick Smith made six saves in net for the hosts, while Nathan Lanham secured the shutout for Winfield with three stops.

Wood noted that the better team won on this night and that the setback didn't diminish anything that happened this fall, but the fourth year mentor was still bummed by the final outcome.

He was, however, pleased with the way the community rallied around his troops on Tuesday night.

"It's disappointing in a way because our goal coming into the year was to play 25 games, which would have put us in the state final. It's good that we won the (Region IV) Section 1 plaque and it's good that we are one of the last eight teams playing in our division, but it's frustrating to know that we really never were in this game on the scoreboard. We were in the game on the field, just not on the scoreboard.

"Now, I do want to thank the crowd and community for coming out and supporting these boys. It was a proud moment to see how much support we had out there on the field with us."

It was the final soccer match for seniors Kaydean Eta, Garrett Hatten, Peyton Hughes, Zach Rediger, Nick Smith, Isaiah Snyder and Cohen Yates, as well as exchange student Sondre Folvik.

Wood noted that those eight young men, especially the seniors, are leaving the program in a much better shape than where it was four years ago when they started.

And, as the venerable mentor pointed out, those upperclassmen have been ideal mentors for the other 20-plus members of this program set to return.

"Those seniors are one win shy of 50 for their careers. That's something that has happened only seven or eight times in program history, so these guys have obviously left their mark with some of the best in our school. These guys have played a key role in getting this program back into this spot," Wood said. "They've been good role models for this group and hopefully our younger guys will understand what it takes to get to this level. We'll try and pick up next year where we left off this year."

Point Pleasant finishes the season with a 9-1-3 overall mark at home.

Black Knights even record after weekend games

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

At least they've evened the playing field.

After dropping a 4-1 decision to Scott in the season opener, the Point Pleasant boys soccer team literally evened its record this past weekend following a scoreless tie at Winfield and a 2-0 victory over Lincoln County in a pair of non-conference friendlies.

The Black Knights (1-1-1) battled through a scoreless draw at Winfield on Friday night as both teams produced only single-digit shot attempts, with PPHS claiming a slight 9-8 edge overall.

Point Pleasant produced one fewer shot on goal, however, as the Generals claimed a 6-5 lead in that department. Hunter Bonecutter and Luke Pinkerton each made three saves apiece for the Black Knights.

The Red and Black were also whistled for 19 fouls — two more than WHS — and also posted a 5-4 edge in corner kicks.

The Black Knights showed a bit more firepower on Saturday during their 2-0 victory over visiting Lincoln County, as the hosts outshot LCHS by a sizable 38-8 overall margin — including a 22-5 advantage in shots on goal.

Cael McCutcheon broke a scoreless tie in the 45th minute off of a center pass from Adam Veroski. McCutcheon's shot went low and crept under the LCHS keeper for a 1-0 lead.

McCutcheon returned the favor in the 76th minute after sending a pass to Veroski from 19 yards out. Veroski fired the shot just inside the post and in the net for a 2-goal cushion.

Point claimed a 12-3 edge in corner kicks and was whistled for 12 of the 15 fouls in the contest.

Bonecutter stopped two shots in goal for PPHS, while Pinkerton made three saves as well.

Point Pleasant has a trio of road games this week, starting with Parkersburg South on Tuesday before heading to Williamstown on Thursday. PPHS is also at Shady Spring on Saturday.

Point Pleasant surges past Patriots, 7-3

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

PARKERSBURG, W.Va. — A rather memorable road trip.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team scored five second half goals and picked up its second straight victory on Tuesday night during a 7-3 decision over host Parkersburg South in a non-conference friendly in Wood County.

The Black Knights (2-1-1) never trailed in the contest as the guests stormed out to a 2-1 halftime lead before finding themselves deadlocked at 3-all with 15 minutes left in regulation.

PPHS, however, had three different players produce four goals over the final 13 minutes of play, allowing the Red and Black to notch its first road win of the season.

Adam Veroski — who recorded a hat trick by night's end — gave Point Pleasant a 1-0 lead in the 22nd minute following a penalty kick.

Kanaan Abbas made it a 2-goal game in the 37th minute on a free kick from 30 yards out. The attempt bounced off of the PSHS keeper's hands and trickled into the net.

The Patriots, however, responded just before the intermission as Kellson Cobble outleaped everyone and headed in a corner kick in the 39th minute, making it a 2-1 contest at the break.

Jared Davis tied things up in the 41st minute after an unguarded shot attempt found the lower far side corner for a 2-all contest.

Colton Young cleared a free kick inside the Point box and sent it all the way down the other end of the field. Veroski chased down the free ball and put it in the back of the net in the 63rd minute, again giving the Black Knights a 3-2 edge.

Miciah Jones answered right back for Parkersburg South as Point failed to clear a ball, allowing Jones a clear shot from 20 yards away. The 65th minute goal knotted things up 3-all.

Young sent a crossing pass to Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy, who managed to redirect the ball into the goal for what proved to be a permanent lead in the 67th minute.

Cael McCutcheon bounced a free kick off the crossbar in the 74th minute, and Young was there to bury the rebound attempt while increasing the lead to 5-3.

Veroski added a penalty kick in the 76th minute that doubled the lead, then Watkins-Lovejoy took a pass from McCutcheon in the 78th minute and buried it from 12 yards away — wrapping up the 4-goal triumph.

Point Pleasant outshot the hosts by a 23-9 overall margin, including a 14-6 edge in shots on goal. PPHS claimed a 2-1 edge in corner kicks and was also whistled for 14 of the 26 fouls in the contest.

Luke Pinkerton made two saves in goal for PPHS, while Hunter Bonecutter also stopped one shot attempt for the guests.

Point Pleasant returns to action Thursday when it travels to Williamstown.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Yellow Jackets sting Point Pleasant, 2-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

WILLIAMSTOWN, W.Va. — Everything was pretty much even, except for the final result.

Both Williamstown and the Point Pleasant boys soccer team mustered four shots on goal apiece, but the host Yellow Jackets made more of those limited opportunities during a 2-0 victory Thursday night in a non-conference matchup in Wood County.

The visiting Black Knights (2-2-1) had a 2-game win streak and a 3-game unbeaten streak come to an end despite outshooting WHS by a 9-6 overall margin. PPHS also claimed a 4-2 edge in corner kicks.

Williamstown broke into the scoring column in the 25th minute as Seth Hammer received a long ball in the box and headed it into the net, giving the hosts a 1-0 lead.

Then in the 49th minute, Garrett Hill beat a defender on the left side and successfully fired a shot to the right side of the net — completing the 2-0 outcome.

Hunter Bonecutter and Luke Pinkerton both made a save each in the Point Pleasant setback.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Point Pleasant tames Tigers, 9-0

SPORTS

Veroski becomes all-time goal scorer in PPHS boys soccer history
By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

SHADY SPRING, W.Va. — One for the record books.

Senior Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy netted a hat trick and Adam Veroski scored twice while becoming the program's all-time goal scorer on Saturday as the Point Pleasant boys soccer team claimed a 9-0 victory over host Shady Spring in a non-conference matchup in Raleigh County.

The Black Knights (3-2-1) produced 51 of the 54 shot attempts in the contest, which led to a sizable 21-1 advantage in shots on goal. The guests also claimed a 7-0 edge in corner kicks and both teams were whistled for five fouls apiece.

PPHS secured a 4-0 lead at the break, with Veroski providing the opening goal in the second minute as Kanaan Abbas dropped a centering pass to the senior from 20 yards away. Veroski found the upper left corner of the net for a quick 1-0 cushion.

An Ian Wood corner kick ended up on the foot of Abbas from 12 yards away, which led to a 2-goal cushion in the sixth minute.

Watkins-Lovejoy added goals in the 10th and 22nd minutes on assists from Wes Lee and Cooper Tatterson, doubling the halftime lead out to four goals.

Veroski headed a Wood corner kick, but the shot was deflected by the keeper. The rebound, however, ended up on the foot of Colton Young, who buried the ball into the net for a 5-0 advantage in the 47th minute.

Wood notched his first career high school goal in the 51st minute on an unassisted shot from 25 yards out, then Watkins-Lovejoy capped his 3-goal night in the 56th minute as Young squeezed a pass into point-blank range. Watkins-Lovejoy nailed the 6-yard blast and gave the guests a 7-0 edge.

Abbas played a through ball to Veroski on the left side, and Veroski reached the ball before Shady Spring's extended keeper could get there. Veroski made a touch and fired away, notching career goal 64 in the 60th minute.

The previous record of 63 goals belonged to Jon Casto, a record that has stood for 22 years.

Nic Matheny capped the scoring in the 78th minute by taking a Lee pass in the middle of the SSSHS goal and burying it in the left side of the net, completing the 9-goal triumph.

Brecken Loudin made one save in goal for the Red and Black.

Point, Parkersburg play to 2-2 draw

SPORTS

By Alex Hawley - ahawley@aimmediamidwest.com

Alex Hawley/OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Each team had its chances, but neither could settle the score.

The Point Pleasant and Parkersburg boys soccer teams played to a 2-2 draw on Tuesday at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County, with each team getting a shot off inside the final minute of play.

The guests had the lone goal in the opening half, coming from short range 14:10 into play.

The Black Knights (3-2-2) tied the game 14:11 into the second half, with Adam Veroski finding the bottom right corner of the goal on a penalty kick.

Parkersburg needed less than five minutes to reestablish its lead, cashing in from long range with 20:52 to play.

Point Pleasant — which went the final 18:25 with 10 players — tied the game at two with 10:30 to go, when Veroski evaded a trio of defenders and found the bottom left corner of the goal.

For the match, PPHS had an 18-to-17 advantage in shots, with each team firing 10 shots on goal. Both sides had a corner kick in the first half, but the guests had all-3 of the corner kicks after the break.

Hunter Bonecutter had a pair of saves in the first half for PPHS, while Luke Pinkerton stopped six shots in the second half.

The Black Knights are slated to visit Herbert Hoover on Thursday.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Black Knights blank Huntington SJ, 7-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Very little luck went into this seven.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team had six different players score goals while cruising to a 7-0 victory over visiting Huntington Saint Joseph in a non-conference friendly on Saturday afternoon at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The host Black Knights (4-2-2) built a 5-0 halftime advantage and scored all of their goals in the first 50 minutes of regulation before ultimately coasting to a comfortable decision.

PPHS — which outshot the Irish by a 28-8 overall margin — picked up its first goal in the fourth minute as Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy took a 40-yard pass from Kanaan Abbas and beat the HSJ keeper with a 1-on-1 move to the right side.

Brooks Gilley gave the hosts a 2-goal cushion after chasing down an Adam Veroski pass deep inside Irish territory. The Gilley goal from five yards out came in the 12th minute.

Ian Wood made it a 3-goal game after scoring from 12 yards out on a pass from Cael McCutcheon in the 25th minute, then Watkins-Lovejoy tacked on another goal in the 29th minute after burying a pass from Abbas on a set play for a 4-0 edge.

Nic Matheny wrapped up the first half scoring in the 31st minute after taking a pass from Veroski from 18 yards out. Matheny made a touch and beat the keeper to the right side, making it a 5-0 contest at the intermission.

Veroski picked up a goal in the 44th minute on a penalty kick, then McCutcheon completed things with a goal in the 50th minute. McCutcheon made a clean tackle on a defender to get the ball away, then stood up with possession and fired a 30-yard shot to the left side for a 7-0 finale.

The Black Knights claimed a 16-5 advantage in shots on goal and also had a 10-2 edge in corner kicks. Both teams committed six fouls apiece in the contest.

Brecken Loudin made four saves in net for the hosts, while Luke Pinkerton also stopped one shot for PPHS.

Point Pleasant returns to action Tuesday when it welcomes Gallia Academy for a non-conference matchup at 7 p.m.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Blue Devils, Black Knights play to 1-1 draw

SPORTS

By Alex Hawley - ahawley@aimmediamidwest.com

Alex Hawley|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — One in each half, one for each side.

The Point Pleasant soccer team led guest Gallia Academy 1-0 at halftime of Tuesday's non-league bout at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field, but the visiting Blue Devils scored the only goal after the break for a 1-1 tie.

The Black Knights (4-2-3) needed just 6:45 to take the 1-0 lead, with Adam Veroski finding the back of the net on an assist from Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy.

Gallia Academy (6-0-2) tied it at one 10:40 into the second half, with Colton Roe scoring an unassisted goal.

For the match, GAHS had a 20-to-10 advantage in shots, with an 8-to-7 edge in shots on goal. The Blue Devils also had a 4-to-2 edge in corner kicks.

Bryson Miller had six saves in goal for the guests, while Hunter Bonecutter and Luke Pinkerton stopped four and three shots respectively for the Black Knights.

GAHS has now had back-to-back draws after becoming the first Blue Devil team to start a season 6-0.

Both teams play at home on Thursday, with Ironton at Point Pleasant, and Portsmouth at Gallia Academy.

Black Knights blank Nicholas County, 5-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

SUMMERSVILLE, W.Va. — A rather productive road trip.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team improved to 3-2-1 in road games and secured its fourth shutout win of the season Saturday with a 5-0 non-conference decision over host Nicholas County.

The Black Knights (5-3-3) didn't allow a single shot attempt over the course of 80 minutes as the hosts produced 33 shots — including 18 on goal — while cruising to their fifth overall shutout of the year.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy gave PPHS a permanent lead eight minutes into regulation after taking a centering pass from Colton Young and burying it in the back left side of the goal for a 1-0 edge.

Young doubled the lead in the 20th minute after taking a through ball from Adam Veroski down the right side and buried it in the far left corner post for a 2-goal intermission lead.

Veroski tacked on a penalty kick goal in the 49th minute, then Point benefited from an own goal in the 60th minute as Young crossed a pass that deflected off of a defender for a 4-0 advantage.

Pacey Frum wrapped up the scoring with his first varsity goal in the 72nd minute after chasing down a Nic Matheny header pass and beat a sliding keeper from 12 yards out.

Point Pleasant claimed a 9-1 advantage in corner kicks and also committed only six of the 18 fouls in the contest.

The Black Knights return to action Tuesday when they travel to Belpre for a 6 p.m. start.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Black Knights blast Belpre, 10-3

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

BELPRE, Ohio — The precision paid off for the Black Knights.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team completed a season-high 86 percent of its passes and produced a season-best goal output following a 10-3 victory over host Belpre on Tuesday in a non-conference friendly in Washington County.

The Black Knights (6-3-3) reeled off six consecutive goals in the first half — including four in the opening eight minutes — while taking a sizable 6-1 advantage into the intermission.

The Golden Eagles pulled to within 6-2 in the 60th minute, but the guests answered with four straight scores to build their largest lead of the night at 10-2 with four minutes remaining.

Connor Van Fossen — who scored Belpre's first goal in the 39th minute — tacked on another score in the 79th minute to wrap up the 7-goal outcome.

The Red and Black converted 374 of its 435 pass attempts in the contest, with the previous season high standing at 290. The end result was seven different players scoring goals while improving to 4-2-1 overall in road games this fall.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy gave PPHS a quick 2-goal lead after respective scores from six and 12 yards away in the third and fourth minutes. Caden Barger and Ian Wood also assisted Watkins-Lovejoy on the two goals.

Adam Veroski made it a 3-goal lead in the seventh minute after tracking down a loose ball 25 yards out, then taking a few touches before successfully firing away from 10 yards out.

Colton Young knocked in a rebound from point-blank range in the eighth minute, with Cael McCutcheon picking up an assist on the score. McCutcheon then made it a 5-goal lead in the 14th minute after burying a pass from Wesley Lee.

Pacey Frum gave Point Pleasant a 6-0 cushion in the 35th minute after winning a ball from 18 yards out, then took a touch and successfully fired to the lower left corner.

BHS reeled off consecutive goals over the next 25 minutes, but Veroski tracked down a long ball on the ensuing kickoff and needed only seven seconds to counter Belpre's second goal with his second score — all while increasing the lead back out to 7-2.

Lee scored in the 69th minute on an assist from Connor Fields, with Lee fielding a crossing pass and dribbling around a defender before sliding the ball under the keeper for an 8-2 edge.

Frum added a second goal in the 72nd minute after playing a rebound from 10 yards away, then Jaden Reed scored on a 25-yard boot from straight on in the 76th minute. Wood recorded an assist on the Reed goal and gave Point a 10-2 advantage.

The Black Knights outshot the hosts by a 24-6 overall margin, including a 19-5 edge in shots on goal. The guests were whistled for six of the nine fouls and also claimed a 6-2 edge in corner kicks.

Point Pleasant returns to action Saturday when it hosts Sissonville.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Black Knights hang with Hurricane, 1-1

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

HURRICANE, W.Va. — A pair of eights played to a pair of ones.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team — ranked eighth in the Class AA coaches poll — rallied with an Adam Veroski goal midway through the second half to earn a 1-1 tie with host Hurricane on Thursday night in a non-conference friendly in Putnam County.

The visiting Black Knights (6-3-4) never led in the contest as the Redskins — ranked eighth in the Class AAA coaches poll — came up with the first goal of the night following a scoreless first half.

HHS had a free kick from 30 yards out in the 47th minute, and Jake Bock caught a rebound near the right post and blasted the ball into the top roof of the net for a 1-0 lead.

PPHS, however, countered in the 60th minute as Veroski stole a misplayed ball and outraced the Hurricane defense to the goal. Veroski's initial shot attempt was blocked, but the rebound came right back and resulted in a free look at an open goal. The end result was a 1-all contest with 20 minutes left in regulation.

It was a game that featured a lot of action in the middle third of the field, with Hurricane drawing 13 of the 25 fouls in the contest.

The Black Knights outshot the hosts by a 10-7 overall margin, including a 5-4 edge in shots on goal. HHS did claim a 3-2 lead in corner kicks.

Luke Pinkerton made three saves in net for PPHS.

Point Pleasant hosts Sissonville on Saturday and returns to action Tuesday when it travels to Poca.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Bridgeport blanks Black Knights, 2-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — For the most part, it was even ... except on the scoreboard.

Visiting Bridgeport netted two goals in the opening 15 minutes and ultimately played to a stalemate the rest of the way Saturday during a 2-0 victory over the Point Pleasant boys soccer team in a non-conference matchup at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The host Black Knights (6-4-4) found themselves in an early hole as Brock Amos beat two defenders on the dribble and placed the ball on the right side for a 1-0 edge in the fifth minute.

BHS then caught a bit of a break in the 15th minute as A.J. Dinaldo fired a shot on a goal, and the ball deflected off of a PPHS player and went into the net for an own goal — giving the guests a 2-goal cushion.

The Black Knights had little luck with some opportunistic bounces, including a pair of shots off the foot of Colton Young.

Young had a ball cleared by a defender just before it cleared the goal line, then Young hit the post on a break away attempt in the second half. Adam Veroski also played the Young ricochet from the post into a shot that the BHS keeper ultimately dove to save.

Both teams produced 14 shot attempts and six shots on goal, as well as three corner kicks apiece. Point Pleasant was also whistled for 13 of the 32 fouls in the contest.

Luke Pinkerton made four saves in net for the hosts.

Point Pleasant returns to action Tuesday when it travels to Poca for a non-conference friendly at 7 p.m.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Black Knights blank Poca, 4-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POCA, W.Va. — A near-perfect performance.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team scored a pair of goals in each half and surrendered only two shots on goal Tuesday night during a 4-0 victory over host Poca in a non-conference friendly held in Putnam County.

The visiting Black Knights (7-4-4) outshot the Dots by a sizable 19-6 overall margin, which included a 10-2 edge in shots on goal. PPHS held possession for nearly 60 percent of the contest, had nine of the 11 corner kicks and also committed 13 of the 22 fouls.

Point Pleasant started with a fury early on, placing three quick shots on goal before having the ball end up with Colton Young on the right side.

Young dribbled through a double team and found Adam Veroski in the middle; then Veroski slid a pass through to Brooks Gilley from 16 yards out.

Gilley buried the shot on the low side of the goal in the second minute, making it a 1-0 contest.

Young made it a 2-goal lead in the 37th minute after Young tracked down a long pass in stride from the foot of Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy. Young hauled in the pass, made a single cutback and successfully shot low and to the right of the keeper from 12 yards away.

Watkins-Lovejoy added a goal in the 46th minute following a Gilley pass from 18 yards out. Watkins-Lovejoy made a pair of touches, beat a defender and then the goalie with a low toe poke to the right side.

Watkins-Lovejoy completed the 4-goal triumph in the 55th minute following a long throw-in pass from Cale McCutcheon. The pass ended up getting cleared back out to McCutcheon, who then found Watkins-Lovejoy on the left side from inside 20 yards.

Watkins-Lovejoy made a touch and fired a shot from 13 yards out into the upper left corner.

Luke Pinkerton and Hunter Bonecutter each made a save in securing the shutout for PPHS.

Point Pleasant hosted Spring Valley at 6:30 p.m. Thursday and returns to action Saturday when it hosts University at 3 p.m.

Black Knights triple up Belpre, 9-3

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — A good way to go into the postseason.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team notched its fourth consecutive victory and claimed a season sweep of visiting Belpre in the process Monday night during a 9-3 decision in a non-conference matchup at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The Black Knights (10-4-4) — who won 10-3 at BHS back on Sept. 29 — led wire-to-wire after building a 5-0 lead 11 minutes into regulation before securing a 7-1 cushion headed into the intermission.

The Golden Eagles were never closer than 7-2 midway through the second half, and the hosts reeled off consecutive goals before Belpre added a late score to wrap up the 6-goal outcome.

Adam Veroski headed in the opening goal off of a corner kick from Caden Barger in the fourth minute, then took a Colton Young pass from 18 yards out and buried it a minute later for a 2-0 edge.

Wyatt Edwards made it a 3-0 contest in the sixth minute after taking a pass from Veroski from 18 yards away and buried in the net, then added a second goal a minute later after taking a Young crossing pass in front for a 4-goal cushion.

Brooks Gilley made it 5-0 in the 11th minute after receiving a Cael McCutcheon pass down the left sideline. Gilley made a few touches and fired low to beat the keeper on the right side.

Nick Diaz put Belpre on the scoreboard in the 25th minute after tapping in a crossing pass, but Ian Wood countered with an unassisted goal in the 34th minute for a 6-1 edge.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy completed the first half scoring in the 37th minute on an unassisted goal in the 37th minute, making it a 7-1 contest at the break.

After a BHS goal in the 62nd minute, Young reached the scoring column on an unassisted goal in the 63rd minute for an 8-2 edge.

Pacey Frum added an unassisted goal in the 71st minute for a 7-goal lead, but Ethan Coyner scored in the 78th minute to complete the final outcome.

PPHS outshot the guests by a sizable 35-8 overall margin, including a 27-6 edge in shots on goal. The hosts had seven of the 10 corner kicks and 10 of the 11 fouls in the contest as well.

Luke Pinkerton, Hunter Bonecutter, Brecken Loudin and Watkins-Lovejoy all recorded one save apiece in the victory.

Point Pleasant picked up the top seed in the Class AA-A Region IV tournament and will host eighth seeded Saint Marys on Monday night in the opening round.

Black Knights blank St. Marys, 11-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Looking like a top seed should.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team received a hat trick from Jaden Reed and had eight different players contribute goals Monday night during an 11-0 victory over eighth-seeded St. Marys in a Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 opening round contest at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The top-seeded Black Knights (11-4-4) produced a season-high in goals while notching the program's seventh shutout of the fall. The hosts led 7-0 at the intermission and ultimately posted a 34-3 advantage in shot attempts.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy gave PPHS a permanent lead with an unassisted third minute goal, then Reed added back-to-back goals in the sixth and seventh minutes for a 3-0 edge. Colton Young and Tyson Richards added an assist on each of the respective Reed goals.

Watkins-Lovejoy tacked on his second goal, thanks to an assist from Young, in the eighth minute as the Black Knights built a 4-goal cushion.

Adam Veroski took a Caden Barger assist and scored in the 11th minute, then Hunter Bonecutter notched a goal on a Cael McCutcheon assist in the 20th minute for a 6-0 advantage.

Luke Pinkerton added the final first half goal in the 32nd minute on an assist from Young.

Reed completed his hat trick in the 48th minute after Pacey Frum played a central through ball in stride. Reed tracked it down and played the shot high inside the left post for an 8-0 lead.

Connor Fields scored in the 54th minute on an assist from Tyson Richards, then Richards added another assist in the 56th minute on a goal by Nic Matheny. Richards added the final goal in the 57th minute.

Point Pleasant claimed a 24-2 edge in shots on goal and was also whistled for 11 of the 13 fouls in the contest. PPHS also took the only corner kick of the evening.

The Black Knights advance to the semifinal round on Wednesday and will face Ravenswood, which defeated Nitro 2-0 on Monday night. The event starts at 7 p.m.

The general public can attend the game up to 20 percent capacity of OVB Track and Field. The cost is \$5 per ticket, exact change only.

Point burns Red Devils, 5-0

SPORTS

Black Knights hosts Sissonville in Section 1 final Saturday
By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Two down, one to go.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team notched its second straight postseason win and advanced to the Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 championship with a 5-0 victory over visiting Ravenswood on Wednesday night at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The top-seeded Black Knights (12-4-4) dominated the game in every sense, producing a 31-1 advantage in shot attempts. Yet, despite a 23-1 advantage in the first half, PPHS led only 2-0 at the intermission.

Colton Young gave the Red and Black a 1-0 edge in the 17th minute after chasing down a Cael McCutcheon pass and going top shelf from 13 yards away.

Jalen Reed doubled the first half lead in the 25th minute after executing a give-and-go with McCutcheon. Reed received the pass from 10 yards away and finished it off for a 2-0 intermission cushion.

The Red Devils didn't manage a single shot in the second half as Point Pleasant — which had two shots carom off the post before halftime — continued adding to its lead.

Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy recorded a second half hat trick, which started in the 44th minute.

Kanaan Abbas flicked a pass out to Watkins-Lovejoy, who fired away from the left side before chasing down the deflected rebound and put it on the second attempt for a 3-0 edge.

Watkins-Lovejoy was fouled in the box and scored on a penalty kick in the 65th minute, then completed things in the 70th minute with another rebound score that wrapped up the 5-0 outcome.

Luke Pinkerton made a single save for PPHS, which attempted all 11 corner kicks in the contest. The hosts were also whistled for 16 of the 23 fouls and managed 20 shots on goal.

The Black Knights — who recorded their eighth shutout of the season — hosts Sissonville on Saturday in the Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 championship match. The sectional final kicks off at 3 p.m.

© 2020 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Black Knights win AA-A Region IV title

SPORTS

Hoping the third time is a charm. The Point Pleasant boys soccer team secured the program's third state tournament berth on Sunday afternoon with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Scott in the Class AA-A Region IV championship held at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Point Pleasant. The Black Knights — who last appeared at the state tournament in 1993 — will be aiming for the program's first-ever state tournament win on Friday night when it takes on Charleston Catholic in a semifinal match at Carter Field in Beckley. Point Pleasant's contest with the Irish will start at approximately 7 p.m. More details of Point Pleasant's thrilling Region IV championship will appear in the Tuesday sports editions of the Point Pleasant Register, Gallipolis Daily Tribune and The Daily Sentinel. (Bryan Walters|OVP Sports)

Black Knights win Section 1 title

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

Members of the Point Pleasant varsity boys soccer team pose for a picture after winning the Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 championship on Saturday with a 2-0 victory over Sissonville at OVB Field in Point Pleasant, W.Va.

Submitted photo

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — It's been a while.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team claimed back-to-back sectional titles for the first time since the 2006-07 campaigns on Saturday afternoon with a 2-0 victory over Sissonville in a Class AA-A Region IV, Section 1 final at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The top-seeded Black Knights (13-4-4) posted their third consecutive postseason shutout while wrapping up the program's eighth sectional championship in school history. PPHS also won titles in 1988, 1989, 1993, 2006, 2007, 2011 and 2019.

Point Pleasant — which won regional titles in 1989 and 1993 — now advances to the Region IV championship on Sunday as it will host Scott at 3 p.m.

The game was originally scheduled for Thursday night, but Boone County ended up in orange on the color-coded map of West Virginia on Saturday evening.

If either team is in the orange or red by 5 p.m. Saturday, the game will be forfeited and the team in the green, yellow or gold county will be declared the winner. If both teams are in the green, yellow or gold, the game will be played on Sunday.

Point Pleasant's defense again dominated the outcome as the hosts held possession for nearly two-thirds of regulation while claiming a 15-2 advantage in shot attempts — including an 8-1 advantage in shots on goal.

The Black Knights broke into the scoring column in the 36th minute as Brooks Gilley received a crossing pass from Colton Young in front of the net. Gilley tracked the pass down from four yards away and buried it in the back of the net for a 1-0 edge.

The score remained that way until the 74th minute as Cael McCutcheon took a free kick pass from Ian Wood and chested the ball past the keeper to complete the 2-0 triumph.

It was the ninth shutout this fall for PPHS, which claimed a 5-2 edge in corner kicks. Both teams were whistled for 15 fouls apiece in the contest.

It is the fifth sectional title for current Point Pleasant coach Chip Wood, who also was at the helm of things in 2006, 2007, 2011 and last year.

POSTED ON NOVEMBER 1, 2020 BY BRYAN WALTERS

Black Knights win Region IV title

SPORTS

Point fends off Skyhawks, advances to Class AA-A state tournament
By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

Bryan Walters|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Some things are simply worth the wait.

After 27 years since its last appearance at the state tournament, the Point Pleasant boys soccer program is headed back to the promise land following a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Scott in the Class AA-A Region IV championship match on Sunday at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field in Mason County.

The Black Knights (14-4-4) notched the program's third regional championship since establishing a varsity boys team back in 1986, which eventually led to state appearances previously in 1989 and 1993.

PPHS has never won a game at the state tournament level, but will get another crack at changing things on Friday night when the Red and Black face Charleston Catholic in a Class AA-A semifinal at Carter Field in Beckley. Game time is slated for 7:30 p.m.

Point Pleasant — which served as the guests in this contest due to Scott being the higher overall seed in Region IV — dodged a few bullets in the opening half, but also managed to miss the target on a few opportunities of their own while building up to a climactic scoreless game with 20 minutes left in regulation.

Then, with 16:16 remaining in the second half, the Black Knights made the most of a golden opportunity — and it ended up making all the difference.

PPHS had a corner kick and delivered a pass about 18 yards out in front of the Scott goal. Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy managed to beat the SHS keeper to the ball, but the ball deflected off of another Skyhawk player.

The ball caromed to the left of Watkins-Lovejoy, who then chased after the loose ball and managed to dive forward with his foot and make contact before the Scott keeper could either get to the ball or get back in position to stop the shot attempt.

With Watkins-Lovejoy watching his effort-filled shot from his back, the senior quickly hopped up and celebrated mere moments after the shot hit the net — giving PPHS a 1-0 advantage through roughly 64 minutes of play.

At the time, it was only Point's ninth shot of the game — and fourth on goal. Yet, by night's end, it was the only shot of the night that mattered. The Black Knights ultimately claimed a 12-11 edge in shot attempts, including a 6-4 edge in shots on goal.

It was the 10th shutout recorded by Point Pleasant this season, including its fourth consecutive shutout during this postseason run through the Region IV tournament.

The Skyhawks (13-1-1) — who defeated PPHS by a 4-1 count to open the regular season back on Sept. 2 — were shut out for the first time all year in their only setback of the 2020 campaign.

The rough-and-tumble game featured 28 fouls, including six yellow cards and a pair of red cards. Scott was whistled for 19 fouls, four yellow cards and received both red cards — the last of which came with 1:25 left in regulation.

The Black Knights also took all eight corner kicks attempted in the contest.

Afterwards, fifth-year PPHS coach Chip Wood spoke about the significance of the win — particularly for a program that hasn't appeared at the state tournament since Bill Clinton was in his first term as President of the United States.

"I'm just extremely proud of these young men and the coaching staff for everything that went into making today what it is," Wood said. "We put a plan together and the guys executed everything that we wanted to do today. I have zero complaints about our effort today because this one was just so big for our program.

"I played on this first team that went to state in 1989 and we haven't been back to state since 1993. As the head coach on and off of this program for a dozen seasons, it just seems like we've been chasing this goal forever. After everything we've dealt with this year, it sure feels nice to be back in this spot after all of this time."

Opportunities were at a premium in a scoreless first half as Scott outshot the guests by a 5-3 overall margin, including a 3-1 edge in shots on goal. PPHS also received the only yellow card in the first half.

Things became even more intense after the intermission, with defenseman Nate Smith receiving consecutive yellow cards over a five minute stretch for illegal tackles. Smith's second yellow turned into a red card and left the Skyhawks a man short over the final 25 minutes of regulation.

A small scuffle broke out during a sideline stoppage of play, which resulted in each team picking up its second different yellow card of the game a few moments later.

Then, with 18:02 left in regulation, Scott was called for a foul that resulted in Adam Veroski — Point's all-time leading goal scorer — attempting a penalty kick. Veroski's shot was hauled in by Scott keeper Kadin Clemon, keeping the game tied at all zeroes.

Watkins-Lovejoy followed with the game's only score less than two minutes later, and then it became a game of time management. The Skyhawks produced only one shot on goal in the second half and six shots total after the break, while PPHS managed nine shot attempts after the intermission.

Luke Pinkerton stopped four shots in goal for the Black Knights while earning the shutout win. Clemon made saves on five shot attempts in the setback.

Now the focus turns to having five days to prepare for the Class AA-A state tournament in Beckley. Though the high was pretty high as of Sunday, Wood knows that his troops won't be satisfied with just getting there.

As he noted, there is still plenty of history out there waiting to be made — and the next slice of it could possibly be just 80 minutes away.

"We have to go compete next week with three really good soccer teams. We'll enjoy this for now, but we still have business to take care of," Wood said. "We obviously belong there after a win like this and we want two more games. We've never played in a state final, so Friday really is important to us as another step toward a bigger goal. These guys will be ready to play, no doubt."

Point Pleasant falls to Irish in shootout

SPORTS

By Alex Hawley - ahawley@aimmediamidwest.com

BECKLEY, W.Va. — Going all that way, and finishing as close as it gets.

Playing in the state tournament for the first time since 1993, the third-seeded Point Pleasant boys soccer team was tied with second-seeded Charleston Catholic at halftime, at the end of regulation, and at the end of both overtime sessions on Friday night at the Carter Family Foundation Field in Raleigh County. The Irish, however, claimed a 4-2 edge in penalty kicks, securing their spot in Saturday's Class AA-A championship match.

The Black Knights (14-5-4) — which had won eight straight decisions headed into the state semifinal — got on the board first, with a long-range shot from Braxton Watkins-Lovejoy deflecting off the Charleston Catholic (9-1) goal keeper before bouncing into the net 11:57 into play.

Point Pleasant's string of four consecutive shut outs came to an end with 10:11 left in the first half, as an Aidan Paul free kick from near midfield found the back right corner of the goal and tied the match at one.

Charleston Catholic earned a 8-to-4 edge in shots in the first half, and followed it up with an 11-to-3 advantage in shots in the second half.

The Black Knights were limited to 10 players for the final 9:30 of regulation, and all of overtime. Charleston Catholic was responsible for both of shots in the first 10-minute overtime session, but came up empty on both. Both teams fired twice in the second overtime, but the match remained tied at one, and was to be decided on penalty kicks.

The Irish went first, with and Kelen Swan made the shot. Watkins-Lovejoy led off with a goal for the Black Knights, tying the tally at one.

Each keeper stopped the respective second penalty kicks, but Paul made Charleston Catholic's next kick for a 2-1 lead. After another stop by the Irish, Wil Swan made it 3-1 CCHS. Ian Wood kept Point Pleasant alive, making his kick to trim the tally to 3-2. However, Zion Suddeth made the next attempt, clinching the victory for Charleston Catholic.

Each team had three corner kicks in the match. PPHS senior Luke Pinkerton picked up 11 saves in goal, while John Patnoe stopped three shots for the Irish.

Following the match, fifth-year Point Pleasant head coach Chip Wood commended his team's defense, and noted the added pressure once the Black Knights were limited to 10 players.

"Our keeper and our four in front, our four-diamond, they absolutely played outstanding," Coach Wood said. "They played 100 minutes of soccer, and didn't allow a goal in the run of play. (Charleston Catholic) got the free kick, that's how they scored.

"We were under a lot of pressure when we went down to 10 men, and we had to change things up a little bit, we weren't able to play the kind of game we wanted to. They kept pressing us back, and so we started just relieving the pressure, playing a little direct, playing a little boom-ball, and getting the ball out into space."

Watkins-Lovejoy — a senior who also scored Point Pleasant's only goal in the regional final — talked about the feeling of giving his team the lead in the state semifinal, and the ultimate heart-break that followed.

"That first goal was just amazing, knowing we're up, trying to hold them down and get the win 1-0," Watkins-Lovejoy said. "It's just emotional, my last year to lose on PKs, I'm just sad to lose and leave."

Pinkerton — a senior whose 11 saves mark his career-high — admitted that his soccer career was uncertain at times, but playing was undoubtedly the right decision.

"I've had the best time of my life playing with this group," Pinkerton said. "I didn't even know if I was going to play my sophomore year, but I'm glad I came out. And actually, I didn't even know if I was going to play this year, or even start as a matter of fact. This is my first year back being goalie, and I had the best time ever."

Captain of the Black Knights, senior Adam Veroski, reflected on his journey with the Black Knights, from being unsure what role he'd fill on the team as a freshman, to leading PPHS back to the state tournament after a 27-year absence.

"I came in here freshman year, I didn't even know if I was going to get on the field the first day, I was just preparing to be a part of the team," Veroski said. "You know, its been a helluva career. I'm so proud to be a part of this team, everybody on this team growing as a person, becoming a man. I'm proud to be their captain, and I'm proud to be from Point Pleasant."

While the final result wasn't what was hoped for, Coach Wood praised the Black Knights for leaving it all on the field, as well as growing throughout the campaign.

"Our guys absolutely played their hearts out," Coach Wood said. "I'm really super proud of all the guys, they did wonderful. I couldn't be happier with the progress and the things that we did this year, we had a great season."

Black Knights blank Braxton County in opener, 7-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

SUTTON, W.Va. — Picking right back up where they started.

After making the program's first state tournament appearance in 27 years last fall, the Point Pleasant boys soccer program started the 2021 campaign with a bang Saturday during a 7-0 victory over host Braxton County.

The Black Knights (1-0-0) outshot the Eagles (0-1-0) by a sizable 30-4 overall margin and took all 11 corner kicks in the contest, all while also building a sizable 5-0 intermission advantage.

Ian Wood lofted a crossing pass that Colton Young headed in in the 10th minute for a 1-0 edge, then Tyson Richards headed in a sideline pass from Wesley Lee eight minutes later for a 2-0 lead.

Kanaan Abbas took an open field pass from Jaren Reed and beat the keeper with a move in the 35th minute, then Young dribbled through three defenders and scored from 12 yards out — making it a 4-0 contest in the 38th minute. Lee assisted on the second Young goal.

Richards notched the final first half goal in the 40th minute as Nick Cicchon-Ledderhose found him with a pass from 10 yards out that was buried into the top right of the goal for a 5-0 cushion.

Cael McCutcheon beat a pair of defenders and scored from 18 yards out in the 48th minute, then Cicchon-Ledderhose buried the final goal from 20 yards out in the 75th minute.

Abbas and Alex Shrader respectively added assists on the final two goals of the game.

Black Knights remain unbeaten, top Scott 4-1

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — It took roughly three hours of game time this year, but someone finally scored on the Black Knights.

It's also the closest thing to a victory that anyone has known thus far.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team remained unbeaten and have now outscored opponents by a 15-1 margin this fall following a 4-1 win over visiting Scott on Saturday at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The Black Knights (3-0-0) overcame a slow start and built a 2-1 halftime lead, then tacked on two more goals down the stretch to wrap up the convincing 3-goal triumph.

Colton Young started the PPHS scoring in the 18th minute after stealing a pass from 30 yards out, then he made a dribble and planted a shot in the back of the net.

Kanaan Abbas added a low line drive that trickled off of the SHS keeper's hands and into the net in the 33rd minute, giving Point Pleasant a 2-1 intermission advantage.

Caden Barger played a corner kick into Cael McCutcheon on the back side of the goal box, then McCutcheon dropped a pass into Nick Cichon-Ledderhose — who buried a shot from six yards out for a 3-1 edge in the 57th minute.

McCutcheon added the final goal in the 75th minute as his corner kick was accidentally batted into the net by the Skyhawk keeper.

The Black Knights outshot the guests by a 26-2 overall margin and took all eight corner kicks in the contest.

Brecken Loudin stopped one shot in net for PPHS, while Sean Wilson did not have an attempt at a save during his half in net for the hosts.

Black Knights blast Poca, 5-1

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — It took four games for the Black Knights to trail an opponent, but nobody has yet to get the best of them.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team scored five unanswered goals and received a hat trick from Tyson Richards on Saturday during a 5-1 victory over visiting Poca in a non-conference matchup at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The Black Knights (4-0) found themselves in a 1-0 hole just six minutes into regulation, but the hosts responded in the 17th minute as Richards received a through ball from Colton Young and dribbled in for an easy goal — tying the game at one at the break.

Nick Cichon-Ledderhose received a Cael McCutcheon throw-in and beat his defender inside the box area for a quick shot and goal in the 44th minute for a permanent lead of 2-1.

Richards added his second and third goals in the 55th and 73rd minutes, with respective assists going to Young and Kanaan Abbas. Young completed the scoring in the 80th minute after netting a pass from McCutcheon from around 12 yards away.

PPHS outshot the Dots (1-2-1) by a sizable 36-4 overall margin and took four of the five corner kicks in the contest.

Brecken Loudin made both saves he faced in net for Point during the second half. Sean Wilson did not make a save in the first half for the hosts.

Point Pleasant returns to action Wednesday when it hosts Parkersburg South at 7 p.m.

© 2021 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Point Pleasant blanks Patriots, 3-0

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

Point Pleasant senior Cael McCutcheon (25) controls a pass during the second half of Wednesday night's boys soccer match against Parkersburg South at OVB Field in Point Pleasant, W.Va.

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Easy as 1-2-3.

The Point Pleasant soccer boys team built a 1-0 intermission advantage and never looked back Wednesday night during a 3-0 victory over visiting Parkersburg South in a non-conference friendly at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The unbeaten Black Knights (5-0) claimed their third shutout of the season and improved to 4-0 at home, all while increasing their seasonal goal-scoring advantage out to a 23-2 margin.

PPHS took a 1-0 lead in the third minute as Colton Young booted a left-footed pass from Jaden Reed from about 18 yards out.

Young increased the lead out to 2-0 in the 45th minute after tracking down a Brooks Gilley crossing pass and scored from six yards away.

Kanaan Abbas completed the winning mark in the 73rd minute after stepping in front of a PSHS clearing pass, which deflected off of Abbas and into the goal.

The Black Knights outshot the guests by a 25-5 overall margin and also took six of the nine corner kicks in the contest.

Black Knights roll past Nicholas County, 10-1

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Perhaps their best effort yet.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team built a 6-1 halftime lead and scored seven unanswered goals during regulation on Saturday during a 10-1 victory over Nicholas County in a non-conference friendly at Ohio Valley Bank Track and Field.

The Black Knights (7-0-0) had seven different players score goals in the wire-to-wire victory, which included a hat trick from Colton Young and a 2-goal effort from Brooks Gilley. That duo also accounted for four of the six goals scored in the first half of play.

Young and Gilley gave the hosts a quick 2-0 cushion as Young scored in the fourth minute and Gilley scored in the fifth minute, then Ian Wood added a goal in the 12th minute for a 3-goal edge.

Ian Gadd countered with the lone NCHS goal on a breakaway in the 22nd minute, but Young notched his second score in the 23rd minute for a 4-1 advantage.

Percy Frum finished off a pass at point-blank range in the 27th minute, then Gilley tapped in a crossing pass in the 35th minute for a 6-1 lead headed into the break.

Nick Cichon-Ledderhose finished off a corner kick ricochet from 10 yards out in the 51st minute, then Young wrapped up his hat trick in the 54th minute with an 18-yard netter on the far right side.

Nico Marcus Del Rio recorded his first career goal in the 65th minute for an 8-goal cushion, then Alex Shrader completed the scoring with a goal in the 73rd minute.

Wood recorded four assists in the triumph, while Gilley assisted on a pair of goals. Austin Weikle, Cael McCutcheon, Caden Barger and Kanaan Abbas also added an assist each for the Black Knights.

It was the first double-digit goal-scoring effort for Point Pleasant this fall as the Red and Black have now outscored opponents by a 34-3 overall margin.

PPHS outshot the guests by a 35-3 overall margin and also took 11 of the 13 corner kicks in the contest.

Black Knights remain undefeated

SPORTS

By Colton Jeffries - cjeffries@aimmediamidwest.com

Cael McCutcheon (25) kicks the ball past the Charleston Catholic defense while teammate Cooper Tatterson (16) looks on during a soccer game Tuesday evening in Point Pleasant, W.Va.

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — The luck of the Irish just ran out.

The Point Pleasant High School boys soccer team remained unbeaten following a 4-1 home victory over the Charleston Catholic Irish (2-3-2) Tuesday evening.

The Black Knights (8-0-0) got on the board early in Tuesday's matchup, with junior Kanaan Abbas finding the back of the net just eight minutes in.

The Black and Red added onto their lead when senior Jaden Reed caught the ball off of a deflection from the Irish goalkeeper with seven minutes to go in the first half.

At halftime, the Black Knights had a total of three shots on goal, with senior goalie Sean Wilson making two saves.

The Irish got on the board themselves when junior Sully Groom got a free kick past Wilson five minutes into the second half.

However, Point Pleasant was able to respond 11 minutes later when junior Tyson Richards scored on a breakaway.

The final nail in the coffin came with just over four minutes to go, with Abbas getting his second goal of the evening.

Wilson had one save in the second half for his team, with the Black Knights once again notching three shots on goal.

In other stats, the Black Knights led the Irish in corner kicks (3-1), while Charleston Catholic had the edge in free kicks (22-13).

The Black Knights will be back on the pitch at 6:30 p.m. Thursday when they host the Ripley Vikings.

Black Knights shut out Panthers, 8-0

SPORTS

By Colton Jeffries - cjeffries@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — The Point Pleasant High School boys soccer team trounced the Lincoln County Panthers 8-0 at home Thursday evening.

The Black Knights (9-0-0) got their first goal nine minutes in, with Colton Young getting the assist from Cooper Tatterson.

The Red and Black got their second goal 90 seconds later with Jaden Reed getting his first of two goals on the evening.

Point Pleasant got their next group of goals halfway into the first half, with Cael McCutcheon and Alex Shrader both finding the back of the net.

Nick Cichon-Ledderhose headed the ball into the Panther net with just over two minutes to go to have the Black Knights go into halftime with a commanding 5-0 lead.

Reed got his second goal after Kanaan Abbas drew out the Lincoln County goalie, passing the ball to Reed for the easy tap-in score.

The final two Black Knight goals came with under 10 minutes to go in the match.

Cichon-Ledderhose dribbled the ball 70 yards through the Panther defense for his second goal, and Sean Wilson got his goal with two minutes left on the clock.

Point Pleasant racked up 41 shots during Thursday's game.

The Black Knights will be back on the field at 11 a.m. Saturday when they host the Hurricane Redskins in a top-10 matchup.

Point Pleasant put up a total of 19 shots on goal, led by junior Colton Young (six) and followed by Richards and senior Cael McCutcheon (four each).

The first matchup for the Black Knights in the 2021 postseason has not yet been announced.

Black Knights hold off Red Dragons, 2-1

SPORTS

By Colton Jeffries - cjeffries@aimmediamidwest.com

Point Pleasant junior Nick Cichon-Ledderhose (18) holds off a Red Dragon defender during a soccer game Thursday evening in St. Albans, W. Va.

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

ST. ALBANS, W. Va — You know the old fairy tale of knights slaying dragons?

The Point Pleasant High School boys soccer team ended its regular season with a 2-1 road victory over the St. Albans Red Dragons Thursday evening.

The Black Knights (17-1-2) head into the postseason undefeated against West Virginia teams.

The win also snaps a 3-game skid which saw Red and Black tie twice (0-0 @ Alexander and 1-1 vs. Capital) and lose once (5-1 @ Marietta).

The Red Dragons (7-8-2) held tough against the Black Knight attack throughout much of the first half.

Although the hosts had some opportunities at the visiting goal, the Point Pleasant offense kept the ball on the Red Dragons' half of the field for the majority of the time.

After nine shots on goal that ended up getting saved, it was the 10th shot that gave the Black Knights their first point.

Junior Ian Wood hit a picture-perfect cross, which fellow junior Tyson Richards buried in the back of the net with just under five minutes to go in the first half.

At the start of the second half, the Red Dragons had more of an offensive presence, putting the Black Knights on their toes.

The Red and Black added onto their lead with 14 minutes to go, when sophomore Cooper Tatterson hit a shot from outside of the goal box.

Feeling the pressure with time ticking away, St. Albans started finding more shots on goal.

With just over five minutes to go, the Red Dragons got the ball past senior goalie Sean Wilson to cut the Black Knight lead in half.

However, the Black Knights were able to hang on, making some clutch saves and clears to wait out the clock.

Wilson had a total of 11 saves for his team.

Black Knights top Sissonville, 3-2

SPORTS

By Bryan Walters - bwalters@aimmediamidwest.com

POINT PLEASANT, W.Va. — Not as close as it seems.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team led wire-to-wire and advanced to the program's fifth straight sectional final on Tuesday with a 3-2 victory over Sissonville in a Class AA Region IV, Section 1 semifinal match.

The Black Knights (19-1-2) outshot the Indians (10-8-3) by a sizable 19-6 overall margin and twice held a 2-goal advantage in the second half after building a 1-0 edge at the intermission.

PPHS — which has won three straight sectional crowns — took a 1-0 lead just before the break as Colton Young headed in a corner kick off the foot of Ian Wood in the 39th minute.

Jaden Reed gave the Black Knights 2-0 edge in the 53rd minute after driving in an upper-90 shot from inside 15 yards. Young assisted on the play.

Jaxson Haynes closed the gap in half after scoring for SHS on a penalty kick in the 68th minute.

Tyson Richards stole a ball from two defenders and drove down the field for a right-to-left finish in the 72nd minute, making it a 3-1 contest.

Sissonville answered a minute later with a 20-yard goal, but ultimately never came closer the rest of the way.

Point hosts Williamstown on Thursday night in the AA Region IV, Section 1 championship match.

The Black Knight defense kept Williamstown from making any other shot on goal throughout the second half, sealing their section championship.

Point Pleasant had a total of 18 shots on the Yellowjacket goal, led by Reed with six.

Sophomore goalie Brecken Loudin had two total saves during Thursday's game, and Yellowjacket keeper Austin Bosgraf having 16.

Black Knight head coach Chip Wood gave credit to Williamstown's defensive line for giving his team fits in the first half.

"It wasn't something I was really expecting," he said. "I thought they would pack it in a little bit, but instead they came at us and decided to shorten the field on us."

Wood also gave praise to his team for having patience with the ball.

"We kind of thought we'd get an early goal, but that didn't end up happening," he said. "Ian (Wood) drawing the penalty, he did exactly what I told him to do at halftime. I told him and Colton (Young) to just attack the goal."

Coming to regionals for the 3rd-straight year, Wood said he and his team are excited, but stressed they are far from done.

"Making regionals was one of the goals we had for the year, but our goals are bit loftier this year," he said. "I'm just really excited for the kids because we're getting to the point when we're about to realize the goals we set this year."

The Black Knights will be back in action Tuesday when they host the Region IV Championship against either the Poca Dots or the Scott Skyhawks.

Black Knights win sectional title

SPORTS

By Colton Jeffries - cjeffries@aimmediamidwest.com

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team poses with their section championship plaque after besting the Williamstown Yellowjackets in the Region IV - Section I final Thursday evening in Point Pleasant, W. Va.

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

Point Pleasant senior Nick Cichon-Ledderhose acknowledges the Black Knight fans after giving Point Pleasant its first goal in a soccer game Thursday evening against Williamstown in Point Pleasant, W. Va. (Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports)

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W. Va. — There was a lot of buzz around Ohio Valley Bank Field, but none of it came from the Yellowjackets.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team defeated the Williamstown Yellowjackets 2-0 at home Thursday evening to win the Region IV, Section 1 championship, their third consecutive and ninth overall section title.

The Black Knights (20-1-2) had the majority of offense in the first half, peppering the Yellowjacket goal with shots, but none got into the net.

They also had trouble in giving Williamstown free opportunities, with the Yellowjackets having six free kicks in the first 40 minutes.

Heading into the second half with a 0-0 deadlock, the Black and Red continued to put on the pressure.

The home team got its first big opportunity with 28 minutes to go, with senior Nick Cichon-Ledderhose having a shot ring off the crossbar.

He got a second chance three minutes later and he made the most of it, nailing a penalty shot to put the Black Knights up 1-0.

Point Pleasant struck again with 25 minutes to go when senior Jaden Reed scored on a breakaway, giving his team a much-needed insurance goal.

While the Black Knight defense was stifling during Thursday's game, the Yellowjackets did find some opportunities at the home goal.

With 21 minutes to go, it seemed Williamstown cut the lead to one with a goal of their own, but were declared offside after the shot.

"Some things were flipped around from last year, like last year they were the ones favored, but thank God the results stayed the same," he said.

Wood also stated how proud he is of his team.

"This is the first time the program has had back-to-back region championships, and this is also the first Black Knights team to go above 20 wins," he said. "I'm so proud of these boys and it's just a special time."

Leading the Black Knights in shots on goal was Richards and junior Kanaan Abbas, who had two each.

The Skyhawks had two shots throughout Tuesday's game, shot by Isaac Setser and Jordan Smith.

The WVSSAC boys soccer tournament will begin on Friday, Nov. 5, in Beckley.

© 2021 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Point repeats as Region IV champs

SPORTS

By Colton Jeffries - cjeffries@aimmediamidwest.com

Point Pleasant boys soccer hoists their regional championship plaque after besting the Scott Skyhawks 1-0 in the Region IV Championship Tuesday in Point Pleasant, W.Va.

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

Point Pleasant junior Colton Young (19) and senior Cael McCutcheon (25) work to keep the ball away from Scott defenders in the Region IV Championship Tuesday in Point Pleasant, W.Va. (Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports)

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

POINT PLEASANT, W. Va. — It was deja vu at Ohio Valley Bank Field.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team defeated the Scott Skyhawks 1-0 at home Tuesday evening in the Region IV Championship.

It was a rematch from the 2020 regionals, which saw the Black Knights defeat the Skyhawks 1-0 to advance to the state tournament.

This is the first time the Black Knights have been back-to-back regional champs.

The Black Knights (21-1-2) had the majority of the offense in the first half, but had trouble lining up their shots.

This was fixed as the minutes ticked by in the first half.

Point Pleasant also had trouble connecting with their centers and crosses, running into the Skyhawk (10-6-2) defense and breaking up at whatever chances at shots they had.

As the buzzer sounded at the end of the first half, the Black Knights had four shots on goal to the Skyhawks' one.

As time ticked away in the second half, it appeared that both teams were preparing for overtime, but with five minutes to go in regulation, senior Jaden Reed caught a center by junior Tyson Richards to find the back of the net.

What came next was surely the longest five minutes of the Black Knights' lives.

While Scott put on the pressure, they were unable to crack the Point Pleasant defense, sealing their victory as the clock ticked to zero.

Black Knight head coach Chip Wood said the situation was a lot like last year, but some things were different too.

That all changed 14 minutes into the second half when Young got a short pass from junior Ian Wood and kicked the ball into the back of the net.

Even with a lead, Point Pleasant didn't let their play get sloppy.

- Although the Huskies did manage to sneak in a couple shots on their goal, they never gave control of the game away.

The Black Knights added onto their lead when senior Nick Cichon-Ledderhose let his reputation as a sniper do the talking, knocking a shot from beyond the box into the top-right corner of the Husky goal with 11 minutes to go.

From there, the Black Knight defense clamped down on Hoover, keeping them from making another shot and sealing the win.

There was a 3-way tie for most shots for the Black and Red, with Ledderhose, Young and junior Kanaan Abbas getting two shots each.

For the Huskies, Elliott Chandler and Bryson Beaver each had a shot, giving Loudon two saves for Friday's game.

Deel ended up having nine total saves for the Huskies.

Black Knight head coach Chip Wood summed up the feeling he and his team had after the win in one word: excitement.

"This is the first time in program history we've had a chance at a state title, so we're really excited about that," he said. "In all honesty, any nervousness I had was gone by Tuesday. Getting here was the most stressful part."

Wood also talked about how his team's style of play was what gave them the victory over the Huskies.

"We scouted whoever we knew they played up the middle, and we really felt like we could use our wings and use the width of the field to keep the ball," he said. "We just needed to get shots on goal."

The Black Knights will be back in action at 9:30 a.m. Saturday when they play the Charleston Catholic Irish to determine who takes home the WVSSAC Class A-AA Boys Soccer State Championship.

Black Knights advance with 2-0 win over Huskies

SPORTS

By Colton Jeffries - cjeffries@aimmediamidwest.com

Point Pleasant senior Jaden Reed (10) punts the ball from a corner kick during a soccer game against Herbert Hoover in the semifinals of the WVSSAC Class AA-A Boys State Tournament Friday in Beckely, W.Va.

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

Point Pleasant junior Colton Young (19) celebrates with teammate Cael McCutcheon after Young scored the Black Knights' first goal during a soccer game against Herbert Hoover in the semifinals of the WVSSAC Class AA-A Boys State Tournament Friday in Beckely, W.Va. (Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports)

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

BECKLEY, W.Va. — A long road about to meet its end.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team defeated the Herbert Hoover Huskies 2-0 in the semifinals of the WVSSAC Class A-AA Boys State Tournament Friday morning.

This was the program's first state semifinal win, after coming up short in a penalty shootout against Charleston Catholic in the semifinals of last year's tournament.

The Black Knights (22-1-2) maintained control of the offense throughout much of the first half, making use of quick passes and deep crosses to keep the ball away from the Huskies (18-4-3).

The place they struggled with initially was getting their shots on target, making only one shot on goal in the early minutes of the first half.

However, as the minutes wore on they did find a couple more shots hit inside the box, but they were all saved by Husky goalie Gabe Deel.

The Black and Red defense held stout throughout the first half, keeping Hoover from getting any shots on goal.

As the whistle blew for halftime, juniors Colton Young, Wesley Lee and Brooks Gilley all had shots on the Husky goal.

With no Husky shots in the first half, that meant sophomore keeper Brecken Loudon had no saves.

The Black Knights started the second half with a feeling of urgency, peppering the Hoover goal with shots, but still not getting any past the goalie.

Then, with 90 seconds to go, the Irish goalie had a foul called on him when he hung onto the ball after making a save, giving the Black Knights a free kick inside of the Catholic box.

Wood got the hat trick by sinking the free kick in the back of the net, forcing overtime.

There was only one shot made during overtime, and it was Groom who made it, capitalizing on an Irish corner kick four minutes in to win the championship for the Green and White.

The only shots for the Black Knights were made by Ledderhose and Woods, who had three shots each throughout Saturday's game.

Groom led the Irish in shots with five.

Black Knight goalie Brecken Loudon had six saves, while John Patnoe had three for the Irish.

Point head coach Chip Wood said he's proud of the mettle his team showed.

"It told me they were everything I thought they were," he said. "They were a group of guys that would not quit. They were going to play until the last whistle. I'm proud of them for sticking with it."

Wood also praised the leadership his outgoing group of seniors gave.

"This is the most successful senior class that has ever went through Point soccer," he said. "They've won more games than any other class and it's not even close. The seniors constantly showed leadership, even the ones who weren't named captains. They are an outstanding group of individuals."

The Black Knights end the 2021 season with a 22-2-1 record.

© 2021 Ohio Valley Publishing, all rights reserved.

Black Knights fall in state finals

SPORTS

By Colton Jeffries - cjeffries@aimmediamidwest.com

Point Pleasant junior Ian Wood (13) scored all three goals for the Black Knights in the WVSSAC Class A-AA Championship against the Charleston Catholic Irish Saturday morning in Beckley, W.Va.

Colton Jeffries|OVP Sports

BECKLEY, W.Va. — That darn luck of the Irish.

The Point Pleasant boys soccer team fell 4-3 in overtime to the Charleston Catholic Irish in the finals of the WVSSAC Class A-AA Boys Soccer State Tournament Saturday morning.

Down two goals with seven minutes to go, the Black Knights scored two goals to force overtime.

The start of Saturday's game was the definition of 'deadlock', with both teams' defenses doing a good job of containing the opposition.

The first shot on goal occurred 18 minutes in, with Point senior Nick Cichon-Ledderhose kicking a free kick dead center of the Irish goal.

In the last 10 minutes of the first half, Catholic started getting a firmer grasp of the total offense, spending a lot of time on Point Pleasant's half of the field.

Another thing going against the Black and Red was foul trouble, with three Black Knights getting yellow cards in the first half.

The first goal of the game came with 95 seconds to go before halftime with Catholic's Robert Groom scoring on a short breakaway.

In a rare sight for the 2021 season, the Black Knights were down on the scoreboard heading into the second half.

The Irish picked up where they left off, putting on more shots on the Black Knight goal, including a goal scored by midfielder Billy Ford seven minutes in.

Down 2-0, the Black Knights were starting to feel the pressure, making communication mistakes and just not playing with the same energy they had in the first half.

That all changed when junior Ian Wood scored a goal for the Black Knights with 16 minutes to go, giving the Black and Red a much-needed shot in the arm.

Although this momentum was quickly stopped when Samuel Delgra scored on an Irish free kick five minutes later to put Point down by two goals once again.

Having a lot of ground to cover in such little time, the Black Knights got to work with just under seven minutes to go, with Wood scoring his second goal off a goalie deflection.