

'Dogs pitch 5-0 shutout

Women improve to 5-4-2 on the season after victory over Southwest Baptist

John Weeks
Staff Reporter

Five seemed to be a popular number this weekend for the women's soccer team.

Not only did five different players score in Saturday's 5-0 shutout victory against Southwest Baptist University, but the win put the team one game over .500 with a record of 5-4-2.

The Bulldogs struggled right out of the gate, scoring only eight goals in the first nine games of the 2005 campaign, but the last two games have shown otherwise. Half of the season's goals were scored in a span of 180 minutes, a dramatic jump to an average of two goals per half.

Senior captain Lauren Cepicky said the recent outburst of goals has to do with the strong effort everyone has put in.

"I feel like people are finally figuring out where everyone is at any given point and getting a better idea of their surroundings," Cepicky said. "Everyone is starting to look like little pros."

The Bulldogs outshot the Bearcats by a 12-3 advantage with freshman Emily Roark and junior Lauren Davis combining for the shutout.

Head coach Mike Cannon said the 'Dogs won the game before the sound of the siren.

"It was over after 20 minutes pretty much because we scored three within the first 20, which is nice because we could actually play with a lead," Cannon said. "This weekend was a good example of a committee. It wasn't like one person had a shoulder of the load and scored three or four goals. It was five different people contributing, which is great."

Sophomore defender Rachel Ward had her first point of the season Saturday, recording an assist, a pass to ju-

nior Lauren Hawks in the second half, who capitalized by heading the ball past Bearcat goalie Sara Eppler.

Sophomore midfielder Ashley Sternquist put the icing on the cake and the game out of reach about 10 minutes later, when she scored with less than three minutes left to play.

Ward said she knows the team has had many chances during the season, but bad luck might be a factor in the significant drop in goals per game.

The 'Dogs quickly got back on the scoring track Saturday by scoring the most goals in a game since September 2003.

"We've always had lots of good chances on goals, and we've done really well at getting in and getting shots," Ward said. "I think things just started clicking. We were finding the back of the net, and we were working really well together as a team."

Ward said everyone seems to be more comfortable on the field with each passing game.

"We know each other's strengths and weaknesses, and I think it's all finally coming together," Ward said. "We're getting the rewards for all the hard work we've put into it."

The Bulldogs now sit atop the MIAA, tied with Missouri Southern with a record of 3-0-2.

Cepicky said of all the games left to play, no team has her shaking in her boots.

"I'm not going to say I don't respect our upcoming opponents because anyone can win on any given day, but I feel really confident that we have what it takes to beat every team here on out," Cepicky said.

Cannon said he feels the same way and is very confident the team can continue its aggressive and dominating play, but for that to happen, the team has to remain focused.

"If we keep doing what we need to do, we'll be in the mix," Cannon said.



Sophomore midfielder Katie Buehler boots the ball upfield against Southwest Baptist University last Sunday. After starting the season 1-3, the Bulldogs are now tied for the MIAA conference lead. Chris Waller/Index

Men's soccer finishes road trip with 1-1 mark

Bulldogs lose to Northern Kentucky 1-0 on a penalty kick, defeat rival Findlay (Ohio) 2-0 on Sunday

Tyler Madsen
Staff Reporter

When University of Findlay (Ohio) sophomore forward Jacob Schramm was in the right place at the right time Nov. 22, 2003, he was able to propel his unranked team past the second-ranked Bulldogs into the Final Four of the NCAA Div. II playoffs.

The 'Dogs were able to exact a measure of revenge at home last season in a 1-0 double-overtime victory when then-junior midfielder Martin Clayes slid one by the Oilers' goalkeeper.

This year, the newfound rivalry headed east as the purple and white made a trip to take on the Norse of Northern Kentucky University and the aforementioned Oilers in a pair of key regional matches.

While perhaps getting too excited about Findlay, the 'Dogs were stunned by the Norse on Friday evening and lost 1-0. The loss put the Bulldogs in poor position for making the playoffs, but NKU lost to regional bottom-feeder Ashland University (Ohio) Wednesday night, giving both the 'Dogs and NKU three regional losses.

A shutout by junior goalkeeper Nate Gibson on Sunday helped the team salvage the weekend as they defeated Findlay 2-0.

Northern Kentucky scored the only goal of the match in the 43rd minute on a penalty shot by sophomore midfielder Kyle Roberts. The 'Dogs were able to muster only three shots on goal the entire match,

Here's How They Match Up

The Bulldogs play Gannon University on Sunday in a key regional matchup. The winner will be back in the playoff chase while the loser will have an uphill climb.

| | Bulldogs | Knights |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Overall Record | 8-3-0 | 6-1-3 |
| Records vs. Common Opponents 2005 | 2-0 | 1-0-1 |
| Last Five Games | 4-1 | 3-0-2 |
| Last Five Games Against Each Other | 5-0 | 0-5 |
| Last Victory Against Each Other | Sept. 25, 2004 (2-1) | Sept. 23, 1995 (2-1) |

Designed by Lindsay Koski/Index

two of which came from Clayes. Six yellow cards were issued to the team, and two of those were directed toward senior back Mike Boyle, who was forced to sit out Sunday's match.

"I've gone back and watched the foul [leading up to the penalty shot] on tape, and it could or could not have been called," head coach Duke Cochran said. "It's pretty hard to swallow because the ref-

eree had allowed play to be very physical up until then. Guys are getting rocked all over the field, and to get that penalty kick at that point, I don't think it was justified."

After getting a day to recover from the frustrating loss to the Norse, the team was able to obtain retribution in what turned into a must-win match. Senior forward Nate Gaudreault got on

the board first in the 53rd minute on a feed from Clayes. It was Gaudreault's 5th goal and Clayes's 10th assist on the season.

"We try to take everything one game at a time and tried to put [the loss to Northern Kentucky] behind us," freshman midfielder Kevin Barry said. "We just wanted to come out and take care of business against Findlay."

Adding icing to the cake, senior forward Sean Birrell was credited with his third goal in the final minute of play when the ball glanced off a Findlay defender, securing the Bulldog victory.

"It was a significant game for us since we spoiled their perfect season in 2003," Findlay head coach Andy Smyth said. "Everything went right for us that day. That game [in 2003] was arguably one of the biggest wins in our program's history, but now for us it's just another regional game. I'm sure the matches now are not nearly as significant for us as it is for them."

The team now looks ahead to this weekend and hosting three teams as part of the Truman Classic. The 'Dogs will take on regional opponents Mercyhurst University (Pa.) on Saturday and Gannon University (Pa.) on Sunday. Upper Iowa University, whom the Bulldogs defeated 8-0 Sept. 25, also will take on both teams from Pennsylvania in Kirksville this weekend.

Mercyhurst enters the weekend with a 2-6-3 record, and Gannon comes in as the sixth-place team in the region with an overall record of 6-1-3.

"We want to come out and make them play our game," Barry said. "We're not going to be intimidated by them. They are both good teams, and these are must-win matches. We just need to just try to take care of business."

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