

Down go the PATRIOTS

The tenth ranked Wildcats upset seventh ranked Millard South in the first round of Metros

by Madelyn Augustine

Disappointment, defeat and anger filled the atmosphere of the soccer stadium after yet another loss. The boys varsity soccer team had dropped another game to add to a three game losing streak to start off their season.

It was definitely not the beginning that the team had hoped for, but they knew that the Metro Conference Tournament was coming and losing was not an option. When the tournament seedings were finally released, the Wildcats sat at tenth and were faced up against their Q Street rival, seventh ranked Millard South. One of the two captains of the team, senior JACKSON MCGOWAN, had to make sure everyone was on the same page and ready to go.

"I knew we had watch out for Millard South's fast forward up top because he was their main offense," McGowan said. "The practice leading up to the game I worked to keep everyone focused so we could prepare properly for the game. As the captain my role was to lead the team and keep up the morale in a really tough, rivalry game."

The pressure to succeed was high and the team was filled with nerves. Back-up captain, junior ANDREW HALL wanted nothing more than to beat the Patriots and move on to the next round of the tournament.

"I wasn't that nervous because I have experience at the high school level," Hall said. "Since I've been on the team for two years, I knew what to expect from Millard South and I felt prepared to play them. I thought the game was intense due to the rivalry we have with them. Personally, I don't think our team played up to our potential, but I was still proud of us for not ever giving up throughout the whole game. Games against Millard South are always hyped up because we are such big rivals with them, but it makes winning that much more fun."

Both teams fought desperately to find the back of the net before the final whistle, but neither did. The game got pushed into double overtime. Millard South struck first and took an early lead in the first half of extra time. The Wildcats weren't done fighting though and with two minutes left sophomore DANIEL GORNELL leveled the score.

"Even though we were down a goal, I refused to give up," Gornell said. "I could tell we were gaining momentum and the tension was growing as time went on. When Riley threw the ball in I saw my chance and I took it. It happened so fast I could barely believe I had just scored and brought our team back into the game."

The game was still tied at the end of both overtime periods, so both teams prepared to take penalty kicks to decide the winner. The first five shooters lined up from both sides. Goalkeeper, junior SAMUEL FEDDE, saved three of Millard South's shots. The first two Wildcat shots were saved by the Millard South goalkeeper. The next three Wildcats that were up to shoot knew that they needed to score to secure the win. Hall, Gornell and junior BRAEDAN EVANS all scored their penalty kicks.

The final score of the shoot out was 3-1 and the Wildcats were victorious. Millard South was knocked out of the tournament while Millard West moved onto the next round.

FINAL INNING Heading the ball, senior JACKSON MCGOWAN goes up against a Millard South forward to get a head on the ball first. It was an all out battle between the two teams in the first round of the Metro Conference Tournament because both sides wanted to move on. "The biggest challenge we overcame was just scoring in the first place," McGowan said. "We had a ton of chances, but couldn't put any of them away."



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photo by Madelyn Augustine

KICKIN' IT Striking the ball, sophomore KOLBY FAHNER tries to play a long ball down field to the forwards in the attacking third. As a sophomore, Fahner felt the pressure to do well in one of the hardest games of season against Westside. "As a team we have a lot of room for improvement," Fahner said. "We get better every day, but we still need to figure out a few things and how to work well together as a team."

EYES ON THE PRIZE Dribbling down field, junior BRAEDAN EVANS focuses on keeping the ball under control and in-bounds. Evans was chosen as one of the two captains for the season and used this position to motivate his teammates. "My role as captain is to keep everyone calm if things flare up," Evans said. "I also try to pick people up when they are feeling down or make a mistake and I always bring positivity to practices and games."

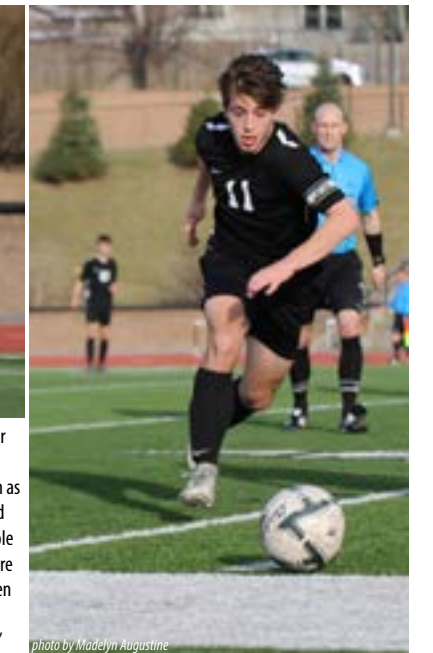


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love OF THE game



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Players give an insight into their own personal thoughts on soccer and their team this season

"I have been playing soccer for 11 years. I love the sport and it helps me stay fit. I love the intensity and the desire to win the varsity team has this year. My favorite part of being on the team is working together to figure out what we can do to improve. We have so much talent this year."
-Jonah Tubough '20

"I've grown up with soccer and have watched it since I was a little kid. My favorite part about playing for Millard West is that I feel there is more to play for because I won't play with some of my teammates again. I like high school soccer more than club because I'm better friends with everyone on the team."
-Daniel Zapata '19

"I've played soccer my whole life. I love it because it keeps me in shape and I am able to be physical. After we score a goal we all celebrate together as team. The start of the season was rough because I was coming back from knee surgery, but things started clicking once I was back."
-Riley Hackbart '20

"My dad really got me into playing soccer because he also played. I started playing when I was five and now it's my favorite sport. I have been on varsity for three years now and I love meeting all the new guys on the team because they're all really fun to talk to and hangout with."
-Sergio Araya '18

"When I was little I always wanted to play goalie, but never got the opportunity to until a few years ago. I thought I would be good at it because I am tall. I like having practice every day and having a game every couple days. Soccer has been a big part of my life for pretty much my whole life."
-Samuel Fedde '19



photo by Madelyn Augustine

FIGHT TO THE FINISH Battling to win the ball back for his team, junior TREVOR GREEN does his best to beat the Westside defender to create an attack towards goal. Going into the season, Green knew that the varsity team had a lot of talented players and playing time would have to be fought for. "The Millard West team has a unique atmosphere because everyone on the team is super close and everyone is dedicated to the team," Green said. "Our team has a lot of depth this season and all of my teammates help push me to improve as a player every day at both games and practices."



photo by Madelyn Augustine

SHOOT YOUR SHOT Clearing the ball, junior EDRIC TEUT helps get his team out of their defensive third. The Wildcats knew the game against Westside was going to be a tough one and that they had to be prepared. "West soccer has a strong sense of community," Teut said. "Practicing every day helps me and the team improve and prepare for games."
PLAYING FOOTY Running up field with the ball at his feet, sophomore DANIEL GORNELL looks for an open teammate to pass to. The Wildcats were squaring off against Millard South for the second time in a week. "I thought we had an upper edge on Millard South," Gornell said. "To prepare we worked on set pieces because we struggled with them in the past couple games."



photo by Madelyn Augustine