

Strong Ocelot effort gains tie with MSU

By C.J. Hawk
staff writer

It was hot. It was humid. And it was even.

The last fact impressed Schoolcraft College men's soccer coach Van Dimitriou the most. Few figured the Ocelots could stymie talented Michigan State University, but they did Friday night, battling the Spartans to a 1-1 tie at Livonia Stevenson.

And, although neither team had an advantage on the scoreboard, if there

was a winner Friday it was Schoolcraft. A moral victory, then?
"Absolutely," agreed Dimitriou. "We played a very strong game."

INDEED THE OCELOTS did. The first half ended scoreless, with both teams showing the effects of the 80-plus temperature and humidity. But halftime is a chance to rejuvenate, and Schoolcraft did just that.

The Ocelots took control in the early moments of the second half behind the play of forward John Gelinski and mid-fielder Rick Hamers. Still, two solid

scoring opportunities slipped away, the first when a perfect centering pass from Hamers in the right corner was headed over the net by Joe Mase, the second when Hamers got off a clear shot that went right to MSU goalie Paul Zimmerman.

Persistence finally paid off for Schoolcraft — with a little help from Gelinski. The former prep all-star from Stevenson dribbled the ball through an MSU defender into the right corner, then fired a centering pass. A point-blank shot was deflected straight to Joe Novak, another Stevenson grad,

who buried it to give the Ocelots a 1-0 lead with 29 minutes to play.

AS UPLIFTING as the goal might have been for Schoolcraft, it seemingly had a greater effect on MSU. The Spartans pressured relentlessly, and only a pair of diving stops by Ocelot goalkeeper Sam Matovski, from Livonia Churchill, kept them from scoring.

At least for awhile. Matovski's heroics weren't enough to halt Sherin Elwy's drive from 10 yards away, directly in front of the net, off a corner

kick. The goal came with 24 minutes to go, and was one of Schoolcraft's few defensive lapses.

"That was the first time we've ever seen corner kicks like that," Dimitriou said. "They were hitting them low and hard, and then swarming to the ball."

Throughout the contest both teams failed to finish solid scoring chances. Gelinski lofted one shot over an open net in the first half, then saw a bloop shot barely deflected away by Zimmerman in the second.

"We had some opportunities," admitted Dimitriou. "I think the kids felt the pressure early on."

BUT WHILE the offenses struggled, both defenses were sharp. Ocelot stopper Scott Steiner, from Plymouth Salem, "was our savior back there,"

said Dimitriou. "He plays that position like it's supposed to be played."

Schoolcraft also got solid defensive play from Abe and Anwar Vafai, both Livonia Bentley grads, and Todd Ericson, from Stevenson. MSU's defense was anchored by Troy Athens grad Steve Smith.

As nice as a win would have been, Dimitriou was more than satisfied with the tie.

"We're getting there," he said, evaluating his team's progress. "I think we'll be ready for our league opener."

But that's Saturday at perennial powerhouse Macomb CC. Isn't that a pretty tough way for the Ocelots to start the defense of the Region 12 title?

"I wouldn't have it any other way," said Dimitriou, "than coming off a game like this."

Hawk kicker on an early rampage

It didn't take long for Farmington Harrison sophomore Victor Camaj to assert his presence on the soccer field this season.

The young Hawk scored six goals in two days. His three goals Wednesday led the Hawks to a 3-1 win against first-year program Walled Lake Western. Camaj scored three more goals Thursday — this time, though, it wasn't enough as Farmington prevailed 5-3.

Harrison led Farmington 3-2 at halftime. But Jerry Potter scored three goals. Tom Gammerrath and Chris Hackman also scored to bring Farmington (1-1) back. Hackman added three assists for the Falcons.

"Our goalie, Adam Krause, got hurt in the first half and came out," said Falcon coach Ed Bartram. "Harrison scored twice while he was out."

Krause came back and blanked Harrison in the

second half.

Harrison (1-1) also got exceptional goaltending from sophomore Gary Wagner. He made 17 saves against the Falcons and 12 against Western.

CHURCHILL 4, N. FARMINGTON 1: Getting strong play from its forward line, Livonia Churchill cruised to its second straight boys soccer victory Thursday at North Farmington.

The Chargers jumped out to a 2-0 halftime lead on goals by Brett Murphy and Brad Mase.

North, however, cut the lead to 2-1 at the outset of the second half on Darrel Krause's goal.

Churchill then put the game away on goals Brian O'Leary and Mase.

Steve Michaelian assisted on the second and fourth Churchill goals.

The Chargers outshot North, 18-10.

"We just don't finish what we start," said North coach Cathy Cole, whose team fell to 0-2. "Our intensity level was below par."

The lone bright spot for North was back-up goalie Fred Menko, who turned in a strong game in place of the injured Dennis McCarthy.

Crusaders take Bay Cup

Katy Andrae powered the offense while a host of players combined on a stingy defensive effort that enabled the Livonia Crusaders under 19 girls soccer team to capture the Bay Challenge Cup last weekend in Bay Village, Ohio.

The victory was the fourth in six tournaments this summer for the Crusaders, coached by Dave Lusler and a descendant of his earlier FLIP Rowdies squad. The Crusaders are 23-4-2 for the summer.

Andrae, from Birmingham Seaholm, pumped in seven goals despite missing the championship contest of the four-game tournament with a twisted ankle.

The defense sparkled throughout the tourney, allowing just two goals. Doreen Beagle, a Livonia Stevenson grad now at Schoolcraft College, led the effort from her goalkeeper's position.

BACKS JULIE MEYERS (Livonia Churchill), Leigh Clancy (Farmington Hills Mercy), Kelly Dav-

is (Churchill) and Michelle Gauthier (Plainwell) were exceptional, particularly in the Crusaders' 5-1 victory over the Warren Rowdies in Monday's championship game.

Klin Paterson (Stevenson) and Janice Kosman (Plainwell) each scored twice in the tournament final and Colleen Churchill (Churchill) had one goal.

In Sunday's semifinal, the Crusaders blanked Watson (Ont.) 3-0, with Andrae, Kosman and Meyers accounting for the scoring.

The Livonia-based team reached the tourney's final rounds by pounding Elmira (Ont.) 7-1 Saturday evening. Andrae notched three goals, but it was the halfbacks who dominated action.

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