

Wildcats, Green Wave play to scoreless draw

BY JASON TUREK
Sports Reporter

Through 90 minutes in 90-degree heat, Bethel and New Milford gutted it out, but in the end, no winner was decided as the teams played to a 0-0 draw in boys soccer Tuesday in Bethel.

Bethel, a team looking to upgrade at goaltender after allowing 66 goals in 14 games last season, may have found what they are looking for in senior Ben Bryan, who was solid in his first high school soccer game.

"The first time Ben had to come out and play a ball I was cringing," said Bethel coach Frank Musser. "I expected the ball to go through his fingers based on last season, but he played it like you're supposed to. He didn't make any spectacular plays, but anything that came his way he caught it with authority."

New Milford 0
Bethel 0

ScheduleB2

Bethel, a young team starting six sophomores, also displayed its skill and depth.

"We have at least 18 players who can play and contribute to the team," said Musser. "We attacked well and gave ourselves good chances to win. We proved today we have resolve and that we're going to open some eyes this year."

One of the six starters on the team, forward Donny Walsh, had the best chance to score when he was tackled in the goalie's box and awarded a penalty shot. New Milford senior goaltender Micah Lamb, also playing in his first high school match as goalie, came up with a big save to keep the game scoreless.

Walsh also had a chance to score late in the second half on a great pass from sophomore defenseman Jimmy Sweet, but his shot went over the goal.

Despite the missed oppor-

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— PAUL CAMERON, WAVE BOYS SOCCER COACH

tunities, Bethel (0-0-1) was aggressive and played much better than the 8-0 defeat at the hands of the Green Wave last season.

"It is a great improvement from last season," said Walsh. "We didn't have our best game, but we're clicking as a unit."

"If I could have just finished off the plays, I feel we could have won the game," he added.

New Milford (0-0-1), which lost 10 seniors from last year's squad, has a young group with strong veteran leadership. Doug Kitchens was strong on defense and midfielder Diego Mendiola had the best opportunities to score for the Wave. In the 60th minute, he narrowly missed a shot under the crossbar on an indirect kick from outside the area and a minute later, struck the left goal post on a shot from 30 yards away.

"I know Bethel may have had a little more of the ball than we did, but we had a very good game, too," said Mendiola. "We are playing plenty of freshmen and I'm sure they were nervous today, but they played well."

New Milford coach Paul Cameron said the game could have gone either way.

"Both teams had great chances to score. I think Bethel may have had one or two more clear-cut chances," he said. "It was a tough game, as both teams were up for it and were tackling hard."

Cameron feels his team is still trying to get to know one another and continue to work hard.

"We still need to work on our set pieces on offense and stretch the opposing team's defense," he said. "The kids really haven't played with each other, so we're still working on being more of a cohesive unit. With more games played, we will be able to accomplish that."

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