

Marquette honors seven seniors with 7-0 win over East Alton-Wood River

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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ALTON – Marquette Catholic's senior girls soccer class have made many contributions to the program over the past four years.

The Explorers celebrated those contributions Wednesday afternoon in their annual Senior Day match against East Alton-Wood River at Gordon Moore Park, Marquette getting a pair of goals from Elisa Senno and a goal and assist from Annabelle Copeland as the Explorers defeated the Oilers 7-0 to go to 7-4 on the season; EAWR fell to 1-11.

Senno and Copeland were among seven seniors honored on the day; Clair Dalton, Anna Boeschert, Ketoura Ngwa, Kelsey Blasingham and Maddie Conners also make up the Explorers' senior class this season and were each honored during a halftime ceremony.

“It was a good day,” said Explorer coach Steve Mitchell, “good for all the kids; they did very well. I'm happy for them; they did a great job. They came in and took care of business.”

Mitchell is very proud of all the seniors for the contributions they've made to the program. “They've had three or four great years,” Mitchell said, “to go to three (IHSA) super-sectionals in a row and get a chance to go to state is the real deal. But (the state Class) 2A (playoffs) are coming; it's a whole different ballgame.”

The chance to get to the state Class 2A tournament is there if the Explorers want it, Mitchell believes. “If they want it, they'll get it,” Mitchell said. “If you put your mind to it, you can do it, but there can't be any laziness; they'll all have to play together and as a team. It can't be two out of 11, it's got to be all 11, especially in 2A.”

“That's an excellent ball club,” said Oiler coach Matt Herndon. “We knew it coming in; we've had a rough season, but with the effort the girls had today, I thought it was a pretty good effort.

“We're extremely young and we have a lot of players out with injuries; my bench is pretty thin right now. I thought my goalie (Emily Sidwell) made some exceptional saves. We gave up seven goals, but it could have been a lot more; she made some nice, acrobatic saves. She did a great job. Steve does a great job with them; they're going to go far in the postseason.”

Marquette dominated play throughout the match, possessing the ball in the Oiler end the majority of the day, breaking through in the 14th minute when Copeland got a pass from Conners and putting the ball past Sidwell for the first Marquette goal of the day; Dalton scored in the 20th minute from Ngwa and Senno got the first of her two goals in the 37th minute off an assist from Conners.

Senno and Copeland teamed up for the fourth Explorer goal in the 48th minute before Kaya Thies scored an unassisted goal in the 61st minute. Lauren Fischer, who was in goal in the first half for Marquette, was inserted into the lineup as a field player in the second half and wound up getting an unassisted goal in the 68th minute before Boeschert, assisted by Quinn Smith, wrapped up the scoring in the final minute of the match.

Fischer, Sanora Eldred and Ngwa all had time in goal for the Explorers, each sharing in the clean sheet.

Next up for the Explorers is a 5 p.m. Tuesday match at Waterloo Gibault before hosting Metro East Lutheran at 4:30 p.m. April 27 at Gordon Moore Park; the Oilers next take on McGivney Catholic at 4:30 p.m. today at Wood River Soccer Park before clashing with backyard rival Roxana at 4:30 p.m. Monday at Soccer Park; the Oilers will be the home team for the match.