

Explorers top Shells 2-0 to take third in Metro Cup Adidas Bracket

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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BELLEVILLE – Marquette Catholic's girls' soccer team finished a successful Adidas Bracket competition in the Metro Girls Cup season-opening tournament Saturday afternoon with a 2-0 win over Roxana in the bracket's third-place match at Belleville Althoff's stadium.

The Explorers finished the tournament with a 3-1 mark, losing only to Columbia Wednesday night; the Shells, in their first time in the tournament, stand at 1-2-1 on the season.

“I thought we played well,” said Explorer coach Brian Hoener. “The first 40 minutes was probably the better soccer we've played this season; I know it's very early in the season. We played well in the first 40 minutes and kind of saw it through in the second half.

“We scored two nice goals and came out of the tournament against some very nice competition 3-1; it's a very nice way to start the season.”

The tournament gave the Explorers a chance to learn a few things about themselves and set the course for the season. “I thought we learned a lot about ourselves,” Hoener said, “and we'll get ready to get back at work Monday and fix some of the things we learned that we can do better this weekend and continue to work hard.”

Shells coach Lori Yates was happy with how things went for her side on the week. “I'm proud of my girls,” Yates said. “We have never played in this tournament – it's our first time; I know we had four tough teams and we don't practice or play on turf (Althoff's facility, which opened in the fall, is much like other facilities in the area, with a field of artificial turf). The turf is new for us.

“The girls did well; we improved every game and they did what I asked. We have some things to work on to get ready for the regular season and I'm proud of the way it turned out.”

Saturday's match was the first one between the two area rivals since 2016; two scheduled matches between them were called off because of bad weather. “We haven't seen them in two years,” Yates said, “and we play them again in two weeks at Gordon Moore (Park in Alton). We'll be ready.”

The Explorers got first-half goals from Emma Anslem and Amanda Murray to get the win; Lauren Fischer recorded the clean sheet for MCHS, while Braeden Lackey was in goal for the Shells on the day.

Marquette heads to Columbia for a 6:30 p.m. Tuesday match against the Eagles before going to Breese Mater Dei for a 6:30 p.m. Thursday contest against the Knights, while the Shells take on backyard rival East Alton-Wood River at 4:30 p.m. Monday at Wood River Soccer Park before hosting Metro East Lutheran at 4:30 p.m. March 26, also at Wood River Soccer Park.

