

Davis, Paniagua Both Score Against O'Fallon In 4-2 Setback In Season-Opener

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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O'FALLON – The Marquette Catholic High School boys soccer team (0-1) opened their season on the road against the O'Fallon Panthers (1-0). The Explorers were defeated by a score of 4-2 by the Southwestern Conference powerhouse.

When the two met in last year's season-opener, the Panthers won 2-0 at Gordon Moore.

The Panthers took control in the early going, having most of the possession in the first 10 minutes. That led to their first goal. After a deep throw-in from near the corner flag, the ball bounced around in the 18-yard box before it was finally headed in by sophomore defender Zaden Brisley to make it 1-0.

Marquette had a good chance in the 19th minute as a ball was crossed in straight across the six-yard box, but O'Fallon's keeper made the save, his best of the game.

In the 19th minute is when the Explorers brought the game level. Senior midfielder Dre Davis, who scored 20 goals last season, bagged his first of the year when he headed in a chipped ball across the six-yard box.

After that goal, the game blew wide open as it just went from end to end. To Marquette's dismay, the Panthers still controlled most of the possession in the first half, which led to their second goal in the 37th minute from senior midfielder Matt Kulp.

The score was 2-1 O'Fallon at halftime.

Things got off to a bit of a slower start in the second half, with both teams having few opportunities for another breakthrough. But more goals were still to come.

In the 61st minute, the teams exchanged goals. O'Fallon went first when senior midfielder Carson Howe made it 3-1, but the Explorers stormed right back down the field when senior forward Myles Paniagua netted his first goal of the season. Just like that, it was a 3-2 ball game with just under 20 minutes to play.

Things did get a little feisty headed toward the conclusion of the match as the Explorers saw three yellow cards. It was enough to break their concentration along with some heavy legs that allowed O'Fallon to grab their fourth.

It came in the 77th minute when senior forward Carter Breuchard scored from about 25 yards out straight away into the upper corner of the net to ice the game and make it 4-2 Panthers. That's how the game would finish.

Despite the result, head coach Brian Hoener, in his first year with the team, was happy with his team's intensity and the fact that they never gave up.

"I thought we competed hard," he said. "I think it shows a lot of character, a lot of fight, a lot of grit."

He mentioned that he wanted the first few games of the season to be tough so he could learn early on what his team needed to work on. They got a good test against the Panthers.

"We like to challenge ourselves," Hoener said.

The Explorers were supposed to have another tough battle coming up against Collinsville, but after a scheduling mix-up, the game was canceled. So, now Marquette will be off until Saturday when they take on Glenwood at 1 p.m. at Blackburn College.