

Jersey boys soccer team off to hot start

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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BETHALTO – Any doubt that **Jersey's** boys soccer team is off to a hot start had to be erased by their performance against **Civic Memorial** Tuesday evening.

The Panthers two goals each from Jacob Ridenhour and Jacob Witt and goalkeeper Zac Ridenhour recorded his fourth straight clean sheet to start the season as Jersey downed the Eagles 7-0 at Bethalto Sports Complex in both team's Mississippi Valley Conference openers.

“We've got a really good group back from last year,” said Panther coach **Scott Burney**. “Our style of play means we want to keep the ball in their half of the field for as long as we can; we're very comfortable playing in their half of the field.”



“There's no doubt about them,” said Eagle coach **Derek Jarman**. “They're in shape, they're physical and they're a really good team, especially on their crosses. They take advantage of their opportunities on headers; they didn't surprise us.

“They're a well-coached team and they're a strong team physically. We've got a young team here – we have quite a few freshmen and sophomores – and we're improving game by game, but we're also learning along the way too.”

Jarman praised the effort of his goalkeeper, Jacoby Robinson, who is also the netminder for CM's hockey team. “He's tough,” Jarman said. “He's really come a long way.”

Ridenhour's goals for the Panthers came in the 12th and 67th minutes, while Witt's goals came in the 31st and 62nd minutes; Witt's second goal came off a header from a cross in the air.

Also scoring for Jersey was Drake Blackwell (in the 20th minute), Alex Goldacker (in the 40th minute, moments before the halftime break) and Chace Tallman (in the 45th minute).

The Panthers also won the evening's junior varsity curtain-raiser, defeating the Eagles 4-0.

Up next for the Panthers is the final of the Carlinville Kickoff Classic tournament Thursday evening, where they will take on Springfield Lutheran at 7 p.m.. The Eagles' next match comes Thursday at home against Highland, which starts at 5:30 p.m. following the JV match.

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