Lady Renegades soccer boosted from playoffs

By LOUIS LAVENTURE
Sport editor

American River College used the momentum it created by not losing a game in almost a month to defeat the Ohlone College women's soccer team 2-0 in the first round of the playoffs on Nov. 17 in Sacramento.

The Beavers had not lost since Oct. 30 against Santa Rosa College. Their hot streak continued in the playoffs. The Lady Renegades played well defensively and had several chances on offense to score, but just could not manage to put the ball in the net.

“The first goal that they scored was right before halftime. Too, it seemed like she played the ball with her hand,” coach Larry Helson said. “It was tough to have that call not go our way, but we still came back. Samantha O’Brien hit a ball off of the post just before halftime that would have tied it.”

The ball that American River freshman forward Cerc Velazquez seemed to hit off of her hand just before halftime found its way through goalkeeper Melissa Grey.

Velazquez also scored the other goal for the Beavers, giving her a total of 13 this season.

Grey had a great season for the Lady Renegades and was named the Coast Conference North Division goalkeeper of the year. She logged more than 1,000 minutes in the net for Ohlone this season, giving up 10 goals for an average of less than one goal per game.

“For a goalkeeper to know that my time at Ohlone is coming to an end, but at the same time it’s exciting to know another door is just opening up for me to a four-year school,” Grey said. “Ohlone has taught me a lot, shaped me into a better player and I don’t regret anything.”

Grey and fellow sophomore Presley Strother will both be playing in the annual Showcase at Mt. San Antonio College in Southern California in December.

The showcase is a chance for sophomores looking to transfer to display their skills one more time for coaches from all over.

Jessica Hernandez led the Lady Renegades with 8 goals and 18 total points.

Raequel Hamblen led the Lady Renegades in assists with five and the freshman midfielder will be a key returner for next year’s squad.

Lora Lee, Elizabeth Moore, Heidi Moreno and Celia Ochoa are the other departing sophomores.

“This is the most successful two seasons that I have ever had,” Helson said. “We expected more and would like to still be playing, but we are proud of what we have accomplished here so hopefully we can build off of this success.”

Ohlone finished the season with a 9-4-6 record as well as a host of other accomplishments.

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“The first goal that they scored was right before halftime,” player Jennifer Covey said. “It was a really fast place that caught us off guard. A little bit we were determined and did our best.”

Covey was impressive in the loss just as she has been all season for the Lady Renegades.

She led the team in kills with seven and also had 10 digs and a service ace.

Elise Menicou also played a tough game at the net with five kills of her own.

Selina Samaran and Brittany Creed also had four kills each in the losing effort.

“As a whole we didn’t do as well to accomplish our game plan of serving pressure,” coach Jeremy Penafior said. “Compile that with Sierra’s good ball control and that was enough to keep us off balance both offensively and defensively.”

Sierra College now advances to play American River College, which defeated Foot-hill College in their opening round match up.

For Ohlone, this brings their best season in a long time to an end. Covey talked about it candidly.

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