

Newton girls tally first win of season, beat Grinnell

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Newton senior Amy Speer (left) battles for position on the ball against a Grinnell player Friday at H.A. Lynn Stadium. The Cardinals recorded their first win of the season by beating the Tigers, 4-1. Troy Hyde/ Daily News

Newton's first home match of the season ended in victory Friday night as the girls soccer team downed Grinnell, 4-1, behind two goals from junior Anna Christopher at H.A. Lynn Stadium.

The Cardinals outshot the Tigers, 28-13, and have scored four goals in 40 attempts this season.

"I want to create a high volume of shots because the more shots we take the better chance we have at scoring goals," Newton coach Rick Barnhill said. "On the average, teams score goals about 10 to 12 percent of the total number of shots taken.

"Right now we are at 10 percent on the year and made about 13 percent tonight. So based on that, it was a good performance."

Neither team did much offensively in the first 10 minutes, but Newton cracked the scoreboard for the first time this season with 23:33 to play until halftime. Christopher had a 1-on-1 chance with the goalkeeper and shot the ball through the net as the keeper dove to attempt the save.

"Winning the first game of the season is awesome," Christopher said. "It was a good game." The Cardinals kept the pressure on as they went up 2-0 just a few minutes later. Senior Lauren Patty received a pass just in front of the net from senior Amy Speer and tapped it past the keeper for what proved to be the game winner.

"The first goal tonight was nice because it kind of broke the ice offensively," Barnhill said. "It got us going and we were able to get another one quickly."

Grinnell continued to trail by two goals into halftime but got back into the game early in the second half by scoring to cut the lead in half.

“I was concerned when they got on the board because the worst lead to have in soccer is 2-0,” Barnhill said. “Because if they score, it immediately cuts your lead in half and another goal gives them all the momentum. Thankfully, we were able to get another goal to bring back down their energy.”

That goal was scored by junior Amy Vos with 21:35 to go in the game. The well-executed play was set up by junior Jordyn Thompson as she sent the ball down the sideline where Mackenzie Morris fed the ball to Vos in the middle of the field.

Newton’s final tally of the game was put in by Christopher off a nice feed from Thompson. Christopher missed the ball initially but recovered to knock it past the keeper.

“I was just happy I was able to finish for my team,” Christopher said.

All 22 players on the varsity roster played at least 10 minutes for the Cardinals. Sophomore Jessica Mouchka was only tested a few times as she finished with 13 saves.

“We were aggresssive for most of the game, and it feels good to get this first win,” senior defender Erika Pletcher said about the play of her defense. “We didn’t like giving up the goal, though.”

Notes: The first two goals of the game by Newton were scored with its two best scorers — Vos and Thompson — on the sidelines. ... Thompson, who is recovering from an ACL injury suffered this past fall, did get several attempts on goal. She had three header attempts late in the contest and another hard shot bounced off the top of the post with just less than 19 minutes to go in the game. ... Barnhill said he saw progress from Tuesday’s opener against Ames to Friday’s contest with Grinnell. ... Grinnell’s goal was scored by Amber Johnson just two minutes into the second half. ... Newton’s junior varsity beat Grinnell, 6-1. ... The Cardinals’ next game will be played Tuesday at home against Oskaloosa beginning at 7 p.m. They travel to Chariton on Thursday.