

OTHER SCHOOLS

Ho-hum: Jason Bevzyuk scores another game-winner to give Logan-Rogersville district title

Bevzyuk's double-overtime goal was his third game-winner of the season as Wildcats return to state quarterfinals



by Mary Ellen Chiles

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Rogersville sophomores (from left) Jason Bevzyuk, Finlee Smith and Carson Callen celebrate Bevzyuk's game-winning goal in double overtime. Callen scored the other goal for the Wildcats, who beat Bolivar 2-1 in the Class 2 District 5 final on Tuesday, Nov. 12, at Wildcat Stadium in Rogersville. (Photo by Mary Ellen Chiles)

All soccer players must dream of scoring the winning goal — or saving it. But for some, it's old hat.

"I'm already kind of getting used to scoring the game-winners," sophomore forward/midfielder Jason Bevzyuk said matter-of-factly.

Bevzyuk also scored the winning goals in regular season matches against Monett and Bolivar last month.

But it was still a big deal, he added earnestly, after his goal in the 100th minute gave host Logan-Rogersville the Class 2 District 5 championship 2-1 over Bolivar.

The Wildcats (19-5-1) travel to Marshall (20-5) on Saturday for a state quarterfinal matchup.

A crushing defeat



The Logan-Rogersville Wildcats celebrate with co-captain Conner Stewart (14) after defeating the Bolivar Liberators 2-1 in double-overtime in the Class 2 District 5 final on Tuesday, Nov. 12, at Wildcat Stadium in Rogersville. (Photo by Mary Ellen Chiles)

Had no one scored after 110 minutes, the game would have gone to penalty kicks. Instead, Wildcats senior co-captain and midfielder Zane Winslow found Bevzyuk for the winner, leaving Liberator players in tears.

The Wildcats can empathize. Last year they won 26 consecutive matches before losing 1-0 to Westminster Christian in the state final. Rogersville coach Brett Wubbena knew how the Liberators felt.

“It kills me,” Wubbena said. “I don’t even want to look in their eyes, because I’m looking at some of them and I’ve seen them grow up.”

Bevzyuk was also compassionate.

“(With) just the amount of seniors they had, I feel like, if they won I wouldn’t be too sad,” Bevzyuk said. “But I’m just really grateful that we won.”

‘Rest if you must, but never quit’



Logan-Rogersville’s Conner Stewart dribbles the ball up the pitch. (Photo by Joe Thomas, Greenbox Photography)

The Wildcats started strong, with Bevzyuk heading a pass to sophomore midfielder Carson Callen, who scored in the third minute.

The Liberators evened the match in the 37th minute when senior forward/defender Jordan Burke lofted a perfect pass to junior forward Canyon Adams, who dove for the ball and headed it into the net.

As the game wore on, players took every chance to stretch out cramped muscles.

“By overtime, I was just dead,” Bevzyuk said. “Dead tired.”

Winslow has battled knee injuries this year and had to miss games recently.

“That kid has got a ton of heart,” Wubbena said. “I know he’s hurting.”

“I just see all the guys working hard, and it motivates me to work harder,” Winslow said.

Winslow transferred from New Covenant Academy, so he wasn’t a Wildcat during last season’s state run. But co-captain and senior midfielder Conner Stewart was and he’s ready for redemption.

“It was definitely hard last year, losing that state final game,” Stewart said. “But I think we all had a chip on our shoulder because of it.”

Many players know each other from club ball, but they made it a point to connect before the school year.

“Normally we play over summer quite a bit, but this last summer, we had a better turnout,” Stewart said, “It just created that team bond.”

They are determined to finish the season on a happy note this time. They return to the quarterfinals despite losing one of the program’s all-time great players in Stewart McDonald (94 career goals) to graduation.

“Coming back into this year, we were like, ‘No, we’re not losing,’” Stewart said.



Mary Ellen Chiles

Mary Ellen Chiles is a freelance photographer and writer based in the Ozarks. She graduated from Missouri State University with a bachelor’s in creative writing and a master’s in English, Creative Nonfiction Writing.

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