

LEGACY REMAINS UNDEFEATED

Sabers shut out Minot in battle of unbeatens



TANNER ECKER PHOTOS, TRIBUNE

Legacy's Riley Ketterling (12) kicks the ball for Legacy's first goal during Tuesday's match against Minot at the Community Bowl.

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Bismarck Tribune

Legacy allowed some of their best players to rest in their lone non-conference game of the year on Saturday.

The Sabers were back closer to full strength in their return to action on Tuesday at the Community Bowl against Minot.

Thanks to a pair of second-half goals, a timely save by keeper James Erickson and an offsides call against the Magi, Legacy stayed unbeaten in conference play with a 2-0 win over Minot.

“We were a little slow, Saturday we had a lot of players out because of tweaks and injuries so we were playing a lot of JV,” Sabers head coach Tom Marcis said. “We were a little slow getting into the game. Minot and us, over the last few years, it’s been us, Minot and Jamestown, the three of us have played a lot of really close games with each other. You expect the best when you play them.”

A physical first half remained scoreless, though Minot’s Dylan Oswalt and Grayson Steele each picked up a yellow card for their efforts in defending the Sabers.

Legacy’s defense was tested by Minot counters throughout the game, and they gave up more of them than normal early on as they were working through reintroducing the players that missed Saturday’s game back onto the field.

The shift in lineup also resulted in a higher number of passes that went off-target, though the percentage of them dropped as the game rolled along.



Legacy’s James-Matthew Guenther (4) makes his way toward the goal with the ball during Tuesday’s match against Minot at the

“It started slow that way, on Saturday we played some varsity, some reserves, and I think that messed up some of our timing,” Marcis said. “We eventually got around to it.” Legacy found its stride midway through the first half and dialed up their pressure against Minot, but the Magi’s defensive design made it slow going for the Sabers in finding clean passes to open players with opportunities for shots on goal.

“That came from the different styles in play between us and Minot, they bring a lot of guys back on defense and look for the quick counter,” Marcis said. “Which they do and do well. Then you’re short guys where we have more guys on defense back because of that, but they do have the ability to strike quickly on the counter.”

With halftime over to talk through changes, the Sabers broke the ice less than two minutes into the second half.

A corner kick knocked into play by James-Matthew Guenther bounced into traffic, where Owan Joyce gained control and passed it to Riley Ketterling, who went airborne to knock the ball on net and past Minot keeper Ian Stewart.

"Until the ball is cleared, everybody is on offense, you have to try and put it in," Marcis said. "James-Matthew does a great job of serving the ball in, and it is the other guys' responsibility to get their head or foot on it. With how he serves the ball in there, some of those will go in."

Joyce figured in on Legacy's second goal of the game as well, which came in the final 20 minutes of play.

A pass from Nolan Healy found Joyce in the middle of the box with a man attached to his hip pocket.

Joyce physically held the Minot defender at bay and got a kickoff that had enough juice on it to get past Stewart.

"The pass in was really good, split the defenders, then Joyce was able to find space and put it in," Marcis said.

In between the two goals, however, Legacy needed James Erickson to step up in a big way, as a Minot counter found Legacy's defense out of position and a Magi attacker with a shot head-on towards the Sabers' net.

Erickson guessed right on the shot direction and dived for the best save of the game, keeping Legacy ahead just minutes ahead of their insurance goal being scored by Joyce.



TANNER ECKER, TRIBUNE

Legacy's Kellen Okerson (19) maneuvers the ball past four Minot High players during Tuesday's match at the Community Bowl.

"Soccer is that way, you always leave a couple goals on the field," Marcis said.

"James, he was behind Liam (Horner) last year, this is his first year stepping up for that and he already has four clean sheets. We're going to depend on him, but we have a strong, upper-class back line which also helps.

"Part of it is defense, positioning, anticipation and speed if you have to come back. We were trying to use all of those and rotate guys to give them rest with the runs they had to make."

Minot almost broke the ice again in the final minute, as they had a shot towards the net that evaded the hands of Erickson as he came up to try and play the ball, but the Magi drifted offside at the last minute and the Sabers avoided allowing a late goal.

"Defense is a lot about positioning and the back line always has to move together," Marcis said. "A lot of people don't realize how easy it is to get offside called on a kick, but it does happen."

Tuesday's game was the first of four straight at home for the Sabers, with Minot North re-turning to Bismarck after playing Bismarck High in the night game on Tuesday followed by a pair of home games next week against Century on Tuesday and Bismarck on Thursday.

"The good thing is we have three days off here to heal up some guys and do some training," Marcis said. "When you have a game, day off, game, day off, you can't get a lot of tactical and technical training in. We'll get a couple training days, get guys healed up and be ready for North on Saturday."

Legacy 2 Minot 0

MIN	0	0	0
LHS	0	2	2

First half: No scoring.

Second half: 1. LHS, Riley Ketterling (Owan Joyce), 41:50.

2. LHS, Joyce (Nolan Healy), 63:53.

Goalkeeper saves: Minot - Ian Stewart 2-3-5. Legacy - James Erickson 1-6-7.

Corner kicks: Minot 1-1-2. Legacy 2-2-4.

Cards: Minot - Dylan Oswalt (Yellow), Grayson Steele (Yellow).

Records: Legacy 4-0-0 West Region for 12 points, 4-1-0 overall;

Minot 3-1-0 West Region for nine points, 3-1-0 overall