

# Lady Arrows soccer team season ends in opening playoff round

By Danny C. Davis

The Clinton Lady Arrows soccer team had a very good season but exited the playoffs early after a tough opening playoff overtime loss 4-2 at Oxford on January 28.

The Lady Arrows finished the season 23-5 and were highly ranked all season long. But Clinton was forced to travel to Oxford to start the playoffs after losing the district title game to Warren Central.

"Oxford is a very good team that did not have any losses to teams from Mississippi this season," said 21-year-veteran Lady Arrows head coach Thomas Bobo. "It is tough when two good teams have to play each other in the first round of the playoffs. We played very well and should have won. We would have had to play them eventually, but it would have been nice to play them in the second or third playoff round at home."

Clinton jumped to an early lead against the Lady Chargers, taking an early 1-0 lead on a cross by freshman Tailynn Rimmel to freshman Jakiya Michael, who found the net to make it 1-0. CHS carried the 1-0 lead into the third quarter, when Oxford scored to tie it up 1-1

Clinton then took the lead again 2-1 on a penalty kick by Acacia Rodriguez. Sixty seconds later, Oxford tied it 2-2 on a questionable awarded penalty kick called against CHS. The game eventually went to overtime. Oxford scored on another awarded penalty kick against Clinton just two minutes in the first ten-minute overtime and added another goal to up the score to 4-2. CHS was unable to score in the last ten-minute overtime period from several close opportunities for goals.

"It was kind of an unusual game that three penalty kicks were called in a playoff game," said Bobo. "Two were against us. But I am proud of our girls and how well they played up there. We have been a good road team all year. I think after the game, the girls felt they played well and gave it their best shot. Oxford is extremely good with the best player in the state. They took Madison Central to overtime last year in the semifinals."

"I would also like to thank Coach Matt Fulton. He wasn't just the assistant coach, but we coached the team together, and he was a big reason for our success."

"Losing the Warren Central for the



Photo courtesy Johansson Studio

district title was really tough," said Bobo. "We played over there on the grass on a short width football field. If we had played at home on our wider soccer field, we would have had an advantage."

The Lady Arrows had quality wins during the season over Northwest Rankin, Tupelo and Oak Grove and were ranked #4 on Max Preps at the

end of the regular season.

"We're looking forward to next year. We only lose three starters and have eight juniors, six sophomores, five freshman and eight junior high players coming back," said Bobo. "We made a good run this year with a very good group of girls, and I was very proud of how hard they played and what they achieved this year."

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