

SOCCER

Season offered silver linings despite record

By Steven T. Slack
Special to the Reporter

Even if the Tide's record was disappointing, the season offered plenty to be proud of.

Sophomore Alec Frawley received second-team All Rock Valley Conference honors as a defender after being an honorable mention a season ago.

Senior Noah Russ received an honorable mention for his efforts as a defender, a position he was switched to part-way through the season. Russ scored two goals in the Tide's playoff win over Adams-Friendship including one on a free kick that head coach Dean Wanless called "the best goal of the season."

"Noah was a great utility player who we moved quite a bit," Wanless wrote of Russ. "He has a very powerful kick and as a player worked very hard this season."

Junior Ben Leikness was busy in the net all season and earned an honorable mention as goalie. With a young team that struggled to control the midfield, Leikness was constantly making saves and trying to keep the Tide in the game.

Wanless—who will not be returning to the position next season—believed his team made progress all season long.

"We had great growth from all of our players from the first game to our last," Wanless said. "I am feeling very good about our team's progress this year."

The Tide dubbed junior Aiden Mikulcik its most



Senior Noah Russ (4) received an all Rock Valley honorable mention as a defender. Russ also scored on a penalty kick coach Dean Wanless called "the best goal of the season."

Photo by Steven T. Slack

improved varsity player. Sophomore Jose Gonzalez was given that title for the junior varsity squad.

The 12 juniors on the squad this year will need to learn from this team's struggles in order to see better results next season. Along with Russ,

Tyler Fuller was a senior contributor who will be missed.

"Tyler was also a versatile player that we could use in many positions on the field," Wanless told the Edgerton Reporter. "He is a scrappy player that is fast and would not give up on their attack."

FOOTBALL

Playoff loss can't tarnish successful season

By Steven T. Slack
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The Tide had been going 1-0 for two straight months but couldn't keep it rolling against River Valley. The Edgerton varsity football team lost 46-3 in Spring Green to River Valley in Level Two of the WIAA Playoffs.

"It's unfortunate because I don't think that game was a good indication of how we're capable of playing," head coach Mike Gregory said. "Or of how equal we actually were to them."

The first quarter was a precursor to how the game would go for the 9-2 Tide. After the defense gave up a 75-yard touchdown run, junior Drew Hanson marched the offense down the field and found senior Skyler Gullickson in the endzone for an apparent touchdown.

The referees declared that there was no catch and the Tide settled for a field goal. On the ensuing drive, the Edgerton defense had seemingly stopped River Valley only for a defensive pass interference call to provide a new set of downs that the 2-seed turned into a touchdown.

Though Gregory disputes the accuracy of

a number of calls through the game, he's careful not to blame the referees.

"I don't think it cost us the game....(River Valley) is a good team," Gregory told the Edgerton Reporter. "They did to us what we've been doing to other people all season where we just out-physical people. That night, the best team won."

Playing from the unfamiliar position of being down multiple scores, Edgerton struggled. Hanson was 8-of-22 for 111 yards and an interception. Senior Devin Jorgenson only got 12 carries totalling 85 yards. River Valley racked up 468 total yards of offense against Edgerton's usually stout defense.

River Valley will go on to face 5-seed Lakeside Lutheran who edged out the other last RVC representative, Evansville, 14-6. Gregory believes River Valley will move past Lakeside Lutheran but end up losing to powerhouse 1-seed Catholic Memorial in the semi-final.

"Without a question River Valley was the best team we played this year," Gregory declared. "We had a great year and (this game) doesn't change that."

The Tide's 8-1 conference record made them Co-Rock Valley Conference champions for the first

time since 2013. This varsity squad will also be remembered for its sheer dominance of the RVC.

The defense posted three shutout victories helping the Tide to the conference's best point differential. The offense posted 329 points while the defense allowed a meager 81, a conference-best mark.

"This senior class is going to go down as one of the best in school history," Gregory said. "They're the first class to win playoff games in back-to-back years. Their three playoff wins are the most in school history (for one class)."

Combine that with an RVC title and a 19-4 total record over two seasons and Gregory's claim is well-founded. Gregory said his seniors provided a specific blueprint for the underclassmen to follow.

"The effort, the dedication, the commitment they made to be successful," Gregory listed what he'll remember about the senior class before recalling the challenge he laid out to his younger players on Monday.

"You've got to look into the mirror and ask yourself, 'What do I need to do to perform at that level?' You've got to be honest with yourself. The seniors laid that plan out for them."

SOCCER

Wanless resigns as soccer coach

By Steven T. Slack
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The 2019 fall season will be Dean Wanless' last as Edgerton boys varsity soccer head coach.

"Change can be difficult, however, I know that there are great things in the future for this program," Wanless told the Edgerton Reporter via email.

Wanless has served as the Tide's head coach for eight seasons, ever since the sport began being offered again in 2012.

"I want to thank Mr. Wanless for his efforts over the last eight years in building the foundation for

Edgerton Soccer," Dr. Mark Coombs, Edgerton High School Principal wrote in a statement to the Edgerton Reporter. "He has devoted time, effort, and energy to establish the foundation of the high school program."

Despite his best efforts, the UW-Platteville alumnus struggled to turn the program into a Rock Valley contender. His most successful season came in 2017 with a record of 3-10-2. Still, Wanless is grateful for the opportunity and believes in Edgerton's soccer community.

"Over the past eight seasons I had a great time working with families and young athletes," Wanless wrote. "We built

this program from scratch, thanks to the help from the school district, coaches, parent support and the Edgerton Youth Program."

Wanless will continue to teach math at Edgerton middle school and was called a "great asset to the school district" by Dr. Coombs. Despite the change being made, Dr. Coombs emphasized that he was "proud of the work (Wanless) has done."

"Mr. Wanless has been a mentor to our student athletes and is a valued member of our district," Dr. Coombs wrote. "The district is looking to build on the foundation he has built. We will be posting the position early in the new year."

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