

## Ready or not, it's soccer season for girls

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The Metro girls soccer teams finally got to test their skills against an opponent Tuesday at Kingston Stadium at the annual Jamboree.

With the season starting this week, the girls were excited to see how they stack up against other teams.

"We are just glad to quit practicing against each other," said Linn-Mar Coach Steve Dickinson. "The girls are getting a little tired of it, they wanted to knock the ball around against another team."

But even though the season is about to start, the teams have only been practicing for two weeks, so they are still getting used to playing soccer again.

""We can practice, but it is always different when you are in a game situation, it just adds a different flavor to it," said Xavier Coach Doug Graham

Each team got to play an exhibition game consisting of two 20 minute halves (normal games have 40 minute halves).

Here is how each team from the Metro did:

### **Class 3A No.4 Linn-Mar 3, Class 1A No.10 Center Point-Urbana 0**

The Lions took control of this pairing early and dominated play, keeping the ball in the attacking third almost the entire game.

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Linn-Mar got on the scoreboard in the seventh minute when Lindsey Harms punched the ball between the keepers legs and into the back of the net. The Lions got another goal seconds later from Madisen Garman. Christina Swenson picked up the final goal for Linn-Mar in the 14th minute to round out the scoring.

"We got a good workout for all of the players," said Dickinson. "Each set of players played a half. We are where we want to be. We've got a tough game Thursday (at Xavier) so we are trying to get our legs into it."

Dickinson was particularly pleased with how the defense played at the Jamboree.

"I don't think they had a shot," he said. "It was good to see both sets of defenses hold them without a shot. When we do that we can be more offensive minded."

### **Class 2A No.1 ▯ Xavier 2, Class 1A No.14 ▯ Iowa City Regina 0**

The Saints are preparing to defend their state championship for the fifth year in a row, and they wasted no time showing why they have had such success.

"We just wanted to get everybody in and be as aggressive and attacking as we could," Graham said.

The Saints did just that, taking the lead in the sixth minute on a shot by Kayla Armstrong from just outside the top of the penalty box that found the back of the net. Armstrong scored the Saints' other goal a couple minutes into the second half when she received a long pass behind the defense and beat the keeper going to the opposite post.

In all, Graham said the Saints feel good going into the season.

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"Our transition game was great," Graham said. "Some of the touches, just like everything it takes a little while for it to all come together, but I think everyone played well."

### **Class 3A No.14 Washington 4, Marion 0**

The Warriors were clearly the aggressors in the game, probing the Marion defense for most of the game.

Washington used the Jamboree to try some new combinations of players and formations to see how the girls would look against a real team.

"Everybody played a lot and we tried a lot of new combinations," Coach Sean McCoy said. "Not sure what is going to work long term yet, but it was a positive first step tonight."

One of the major changes for the Warriors was moving Morgan Bjornsen, their lone returning defender from last year's team, up to the midfield.

"She is one of our more dynamic players and you figure you want your better players to have the ball at their feet as much as possible, so that is the reason for that move," McCoy said.

The Indians were just happy to get some experience before the season.

"It is so nice to have a Jamboree just to get some game experience," said Coach Becky Herman. "We have a lot of kids that hardly played any minutes on varsity or none last year. Getting those kids some time on the field is valuable."

Herman thought that her team showed visible improvement from half to half, especially with how they passed and moved the ball. Although Washington was clearly the better team, Herman

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said the Indians were glad that they got a chance to play a strong side.

"It's nice to play a Cedar Rapids school because they are a little more physical and they are physically bigger so it is nice to play these guys and then go and play somebody from our (Wamac) conference," she said.

### **Prairie 0, Class 3A No.11 Jefferson 0 (tie)**

The Hawks and J-Hawks proved to be evenly matched as the majority of play took place near midfield, although Prairie controlled the possession battle.

Both teams had a couple of scoring chances but neither team really put much pressure on the opponent keeper.

The match helped the teams see where they are to start the season.

"We did a good job of winning 50-50 balls today which is always good to see," said Prairie Coach Cara Solness.

But Solness was not as pleased with the shape her team was in on Tuesday.

"We weren't able to possess the ball and deliver the ball to feet like we should have," she said.

J-Hawks Coach Ash Brannan said that he would like to see his team pressure the ball a lot more than they did, but he liked the spirit he saw from his two freshmen, Devin Womochil and Kayla Jaschen.

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"They were really scared and nervous," Brannan said. "I saw a lot of effort from those two young freshmen. It was their first game, they were kind of just running around, but at least they put the effort in."