

Oct. 13 Girls Soccer

Hamilton survives against Hopewell Valley to remain on the upswing

By Rich Fisher

Fish4Scores.com

Oct. 13: There is something brewing on the West Side of Hamilton Township, and it's called the Hamilton West varsity girls soccer team.

The Hornets have become officially semi-hot after taking a 2-1 victory over visiting Hopewell Valley today. It was their first win over the Bulldogs since Anthony Tessein took over four years ago, and makes Hamilton 4-2-1 since starting the season 1-5.

"This feels great," Tessein said. "This should give us a real confidence boost. I mean, it's Hopewell, right?"

Granted the Bulldogs (4-9) are down after going to the state finals the previous two years, but they are still a quality side with some standout players. Hopewell lost its fourth straight today, although three of them have been by one goal.

"I don't want to have to play them at the end of the season," Tessein said. "They're playing much better."

So are the Hornets and their underclassmen-laden lineup.

Hamilton is playing with two freshmen up front in Samantha Santiago and Taylor Nelson. Santiago opened the scoring in the 13th minute when Loran Wyrrough's shot bounced out of the arms of the goalie and Santiago converted the rebound for her fourth goal in as many games.

"She was not on our original roster but in our last scrimmage she played so well we realized we had to play her, and then we realized we had to start her," Tessein said. "She's a little raw, but she plays hard, she wins every 50-50 ball, she's intimidating."

"She's awesome," junior midfielder Colleen Murphy said. "She's always open, she's always around the ball. She's a great player."

Just under 13 minutes later, Murphy bagged a goal of her own when she worked herself into an open position and headed in Sam Barlow's corner kick.



Hamilton's Sam Barlow (left) and Hopewell's Eleanor Turi put their heads together to figure out who should get this headball during today's game (Photo by John Blaine/purchase photos at jbsportphoto@aol.com).

Hamilton's momentum did not last long, however, as Hopewell scored just 11 seconds later to cut the deficit to 2-1.

"We got so hyped up and I guess we thought we had the game," Murphy said. "We just fell apart because we thought we had it. But we got it back."

Neither team would score again, although Hopewell made a late push and Erin Septer came up with three (of her eight) big saves in the final minutes to preserve the victory.

"They learned a lesson today, you can't sit back on your heels when you get a lead," Tessein said. "But we tightened up and played much better, and it looked good."

Hopewell was hurt by losing Jen Kalwa – one of the county's top players – to a knee injury with 26 minutes remaining. But this will still go down as a quality win for Hamilton as it continues to improve.

"We have our differences, we're girls," Murphy said. "But we seem to gel together when we play soccer. It's getting better. This win really boosts our confidence."

Hopewell managed to get the ball into the box at times, but opportunities were defused by the continued stellar play of sweeper Danielle Schneck, who got help from Angelina Cifelli and Stephanie Sparano.

And one of the key figures in the resurgence has been junior forward Loran Wyrrough, who is a complete whirlwind.

"She's always been real pesky, but it's almost like the last three weeks a light bulb went off," Tessein said. "Just the stuff she's doing on the field, the creativity, the movement, the runs she's making, it's stuff we've been preaching for three years and finally it's all clicking."

"And she's getting rewarded, she's scoring goals, she's always around the ball. It's nice to see because she deserves it."

Hopewell coach John McGinley gave Wyrrough the highest praise when he had Kalwa mark her until the injury.

"She's a very good player," McGinley said. "They kept moving her around, she's a very dangerous player. We're aware of her and we were trying to keep an eye on her."

In the past two weeks, the entire Hornet team has been worth keeping an eye on.

Eggert's goal paces 'Stars past Ewing for third win of the year

Much like Hamilton, Nottingham is turning things around after a rocky start.

The Northstars defeated Ewing, 1-0, on Senior Day today to win for the third time in five games after an 0-8 start. The three wins equals Nottingham's total from all of last year.

Sarah Eggert scored the game's lone goal off a feed from Marissa Colon, and goalie Chelsea Toscano made it stand up with five saves.

The game marked the last home contest for seniors Andrea Costantini and Kaitlyn Ragolia.



Seniors Kaitlyn Ragolia (22) and Andrea Costantini pose with coach Elyse Diamond (left) and their parents as they are honored at Nottingham's Senior Day today (Photo by Wes "The Media Mogul" Kirkpatrick).

Steinert and Notre Dame can't find the back of the net

For the second time in four games, Steinert was involved in a scoreless tie as the Spartans and Notre Dame could not get a goal in 100 minutes of soccer. ND outshot the Spartans 20-10 but

Briyanna Femia came up big in the goal to preserve the tie and shutout.

Steinert's record moved to 6-4-3.