

Northwest rallies for win vs. Fox

By Dave Kvidahl
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Rankings don't mean a whole lot on the field. The Northwest Lions were awarded the No. 1 seed in the Class 4A district soccer tournament held at Fox, but they narrowly escaped the upset-minded No. 5 seed Fox on Monday.

PREP SOCCER

The Lions scored two unanswered goals to take a 2-1 victory over a hustling Warrior squad.

Dave Brown struck the golden goal on a break-away past Fox goalkeeper Dustin Schaffer with 12:45 remaining in the contest.

The victory propelled Northwest to 19-8-2 on the season and into today's final against Rockwood Summit, 14-8-2.

"They gave it all they had and left it on the field," Fox Coach Nathan Niehaus said.

Fox hustled after every ball and made Northwest work for the right to defend its district title.

Bryan Wille put the Warriors up early on a penalty kick 10 minutes into the game after being taken down from behind by Bobby Peters.

Northwest tied the game on a 40-yard blast by Tim Williamson that banked in off the far post just over five minutes into the second half.

Brown's go-ahead goal proved to be all that the Lions needed to advance to today's district final at Fox.

"They took it to us," Northwest Coach Ron Wilhelm said. "Whenever we play Fox or Seckman it's a barn burner of a game."

The Warriors won the right to play the Lions by winning 2-1 against Seckman in triple overtime on Saturday.

"We had enough rest," Niehaus said. "It actually helped us, it brought some emotion to the team."

Fox completed its season at 8-16.

Next up for Northwest is Suburban South Conference rival and No. 2 seed Summit. Summit advanced by defeating No. 3 seed Eureka 3-1 on Monday at Fox.

The Lions and Falcons tangled once before with the Falcons prevailing 3-2 at home. But this time it's a whole new ball game. Northwest is the defending district champion and isn't looking to give up its title any time soon.

"I told the guys at halftime (down 1-0) that we're still the defending district champs till someone knocks us off," the Northwest coach said. "Our backs were against the wall."

Summit provides a different challenge than the defense-oriented Fox squad.

The Lions will have an array of scorers to defend. Aaron Deloach and E.J. Olson are the team leaders in points with 23. Adam Baumgartner has 14 points on seven goals. All in all, 11 Falcons have tallied goals this season.

"Last time we played them we gave them two goals," Northwest forward Dave Brown said. "It'll be a good game."

"Now we know what to expect," Wilhelm said. "I met with my captains and told them 'No more through balls.' We got down early and our sweeper had to push up and it cost us."

"They're a great team," Wilhelm said. "It's the No. 1 and No. 2 seed; that's what it's all about."