

Falcons hold off alumni threat



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The Joel Barlow High boys soccer team's win over its former players in the 32nd annual alumni game could be considered an upset of sorts based on the trend of recent years.

While the alumni have won nine of the last 12 contests the varsity team had the upper hand last Sunday, Aug. 30, prevailing 2-1 in front of a packed stadium of Barlow soccer fans. The victory marked the first time in at least the past four years that the varsity has bested the alumni, and certainly can be taken as a good sign for the upcoming season.

The varsity dominated the first half of play and struck first at about the 15-minute mark, when senior forward Dan Goldman broke free on the right side of the field, chasing down a lead pass from fellow striker, Will Kiriazidis, and firing in a shot at about 12 yards out. Midfielders Jake Soodek, Brian Kraekel and Sean Basak-Smith, along with a disciplined and skilled passing game by Pat Stimola, Matt Giamportone, Sean Sullivan, Jeff Cohen and Zack Rizzo, helped Barlow establish a lopsided time of possession advantage in the first half.

Barlow's defense, led by Chris Ferrullo, Zack Frank and Ryan Schwaeber, with new starting goalie Anthony Caruso, preserved a 1-0 halftime lead for the varsity.

The second half brought with it a re-energized alumni team, led by Jake "the snake" Edwards, now playing at Middlebury College, and Kevin Lehman, formerly of Ohio Wesleyan. Edwards evened the score by getting through the Barlow defense unassisted and scoring the alumni's only goal. Lehman nearly put the alumni ahead with a 15-yard strike that bounced off the crossbar.

Barlow retained its composure, however, and was continually on the attack after the Edwards goal and Lehman scare. The go-ahead and ultimately deciding goal came on a corner kick by Jeff Cohen, which was alertly headed into the goal by Phillip King with about 15 minutes to go.

Barlow had several other serious scoring opportunities in the game, leaving little question that its victory was well deserved. Most notable was when Sean Basak-Smith broke loose at midfield and lobbed a shot just out

the goalie's reach, but it bounced off the crossbar. King was there to field the rebound, but his shot went just over the goal.

Kiriazidis, after receiving a touch pass from Goldman, had a close range shot snuffed by alumni goalie C.J. Emanuelson in an exceptional defensive play, and another ball placed right in front of the alumni goal was fired just over the cross bar.

A literal last minute surge was mounted by the alumni when they got a corner kick with about 25 seconds left to play. A clean shot on goal was taken on a rebound, but was blocked by Caruso to finish the game.

Barlow has four scrimmages before beginning the season at home against Kolbe-Cathedral on Sept. 15 at 3:45. The schedule is listed on the boys soccer Web site at www.barlowboysoccer.org.

The booster club also announced that it has ads available for placement in the team's 2009 program book. Forms may also be found on the Web site.

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