

Down goes #1!

The Oak Hills High School Girls Soccer team defeated the former number one team in the state, Seton High School, on the road. On September 3, the Varsity soccer team beat the reigning state champs, 2-0. This was a huge win for the team - and the program - considering it is a big Westside rivalry game every year.

It has been 5 years since Oak Hills last beat Seton. While it is always a hard fought game until the very end, the Lady Highlanders hung on for the win. The Seton soccer team has a lot of talent and heart on their team, never quitting and always fighting for each other. They were also undefeated at the time, while Oak Hills had lost one game at the time. This is the game to look forward to every year, the one thing the players and coaches mark down on their calendars that always draws a huge crowd of family, friends, and students.

Coach Kevin Spraul led this team to the defeat of the number one team in the city and state, just 10 games into the 2023-24 season. Oak Hills was not expected to win this game, they were the underdogs, but they found a way. Coach Spraul states, "Yeah, I like not having the pressure on us because then we can go out and play our game." Oak Hills went into the game knowing that Seton came in as the favorite and there was no need to be nervous. He went on to say, "Our girls were super excited to go into their place [Seton's home pitch], knowing the pressure was all on Seton."

Oak Hills scored two goals and went up 2-0 late in the second half, they knew what needed to be done to close out the game and go home with a win. Coach Spraul said, " But all in all our team did a phenomenal job finishing the chances we had, and kept Seton in front of us, in a 'bend but don't break' defense, to keep the shutout win." Keeping shutouts is one of the main focuses for this team. Coach Spraul and the rest of the coaches harp on it all year long about how important it is to shut out the opponent because one goal could be the difference maker.

Oak Hills Team picture after the win



Oak Hills is also on their way to win back to back GMC titles. They are currently 7-0-1, and are looking to close it out and win it all on Oct 12, 2023 against Sycamore. Coach Spraul's hopes are high for solely winning the GMC (Greater Miami Conference), last season they had to share. He said, "It is a very competitive and difficult league, where we have to take each game one at a time and must get 3 points." Going into the year, the team's number 1 goal was to win the GMC, and they are on track to do so this season.

Coach Lindsay Keeton, the JVA head coach as well as Varsity assistant, also had a little to say about this rivalry. She states, "I love this rivalry, I played here when I was in high school

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and as a player we always looked forward to this game, so now, as a coach I do as well.” Every year, she is the one getting everyone hyped up for this game, she knows what it's like, emotions are always high as well as nerves. Overall, the team did an amazing job keeping Seton from scoring and getting the 3 points on the road, which is a very difficult thing to do, especially against the defending state champs.

Fast forward about a month later, the Oak Hills Women's soccer team finished 8-0-1 in conference play to clinch the GMC title, on Oct 12, 2023 . The final game to win the title outright was against Sycamore. The Highlanders defeated the Aves 4-0 with goals scored by Presley Pennekamp (2), Ayva Moore, and Maddy Mueller, along with a shut out by the defense and goal keeper Bella Dehner.

The GMC is one of the toughest conferences in the state, with some of the top teams in the city. The Oak Hills Lady Highlanders who have now gone back-to-back a GMC Champions, and end the regular season ranked 2nd in Cincinnati and 9th in Ohio! After winning the title, the Highlanders look to make a deep run at the state championship as the number 2 seeded team. While defeating the reigning state champions and winning the GMC, Oak Hills is looking to use that momentum to win state themselves, or make it as far as a district title.