

Press Clippings 4/21/2022

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News

Elgin News Digest: U-46 planning bus trip to 7 Black colleges, universities --- 4/20/2022

By Mike Danahey

School District U-46 plans to spend \$30,500 to take 40 students from Elgin, Larkin and Streamwood high schools and five adult chaperones on a bus trip this summer to visit seven historically Black colleges and universities.

The trip is being arranged through Group Travel Planners of Burnsville, Minnesota, and is scheduled for June 5-9.

Schools being visited are Martin University in Indianapolis; Simmons College of Kentucky in Louisville; Fisk University and Tennessee State University in Nashville; Lemoyne-Owen College in Memphis; Morehouse College in Atlanta; and Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama

The rate includes a tour guide, hotel accommodations and visits to Opry Mills in Nashville and Beale Street and Mud Island Riverpark in Memphis.

Daily Herald

Fox Valley teams enjoying return to tournament play --- 4/21/2022

By Chris Walker, Daily Herald Correspondent

Bartlett, Burlington Central, Geneva, St. Charles East and St. Charles North are among the area teams set to participate in the prestigious Naperville Invitational which begins on Thursday.

The return of tournaments to girls' high school soccer this spring has been a blessing and long overdue as the experience is a new one for the kids except for those fortunate seniors who played on varsity as freshmen in 2019.

"We try for both the boys (team) and the girls (team) to get out of town and do some overnights and see other opponents," Saints coach Vince DiNuzzo said. "It's a big piece of

what we try to do to create a culture with team bonding and making memories that go beyond high school."

The Saints played in their own Augsburg-Drach Invitational, losing to familiar foe St. Charles North in the championship game, while they most recently traveled downstate to Carbondale where they went 3-0 with three shutouts in the first Fralish Cup Showcase.

"It's a positive experience from a soccer standpoint and as a team," DiNuzzo said. "We come back strong as a group and they refer back to the trip and the funny things that happened and the people they played against. We get a lot out of these tournaments and giving these kids a chance to play and create memories."

Geneva is fresh off a championship game loss in the Plainfield Classic.

"This year it's been great to get outside the conference," Vikings coach Megan Owens said. "Last year was so hard. Every game was so competitive so it's nice this year to play everybody once (in conference) and have the opportunity to play different schools and schools that they have club teammates on and stuff."

Having tournaments back in the mix, especially during a spring marred by bad weather, has been huge.

"The tournaments are fun," Owens said. "I think that was the big thing we missed. I know the girls are happy to have tournaments back and to be able to do some team bonding and stuff."

West Aurora opened its season in DeKalb's Barb Fest tournament and recently wrapped up play in the Lockport Cup.

"With tournaments you get to see a lot of different teams from other areas and play teams not in conference," Blackhawks coach Laura Wagley said. "It's a little different atmosphere. We had a little less pressure since we started the season with a tournament, which was the first time we did that. The biggest drawback was weather and getting games canceled."

The Blackhawks didn't need to go to PKs in any of their tournament games, but they worked on them in practice beforehand to prepare for such an opportunity.

While the upcoming state series will inevitably have games decided by PKs at some point, usually prior tournaments are the last time kids competed in a shootout, if at all, with the winners advancing and the losers being sent home.

The North Stars shared the co-championship with Barrington in the last Naperville Invitational in 2019. The Saints last won it 20 years ago in 2002.

Maroons aren't singing the blues:

A year after winning the first regional in program history, **Elgin** (6-1-1) is showing that it's hungry for more.

"We have a lot of our same returners from last year so we brought a lot back from a team that made history," Elgin coach Alicia Knoll said. "They've been fun to watch and they're just doing really well together."

The Maroons are playing for each other.

"A lot of the girls have team goals that they want to accomplish and see the team go even further, but it's also interesting to see that more goals are set for each other," Knoll said. "It's not individual goals so it's nice to see something different."

While only the seniors have experienced a so-called normal season like this one, Knoll has a group of kids that really enjoy hanging around each other and the results are showing amongst the smiles and success on the field.

"They are so fun to coach because you don't always see groups of kids hanging out like this," she said. "They have that connection piece."

Knoll would like to see them connecting more when it comes to converting goals.

"I'd like to see more offense," she said. "That's been my goal for them. Their possession is great, it's just that we could use a little more on the offensive end and we're getting to the part of the season where we have all these games stacked up that you have to keep pushing through."

Triple victories:

Crystal Lake South (3-3-1) has already tripled its win output from a year ago. The Gators, who only earned one victory last spring, are getting consistent strong performances from their back line.

"For us, we have had great play from senior Megan Langdon, who is playing a holding mid," Gators coach Kyle McCaughn said. "She leads us in goals on the season, but just injured her ankle and we hope to have her back in two weeks. Junior Addie Alexander is playing opposite her and is playing some incredible soccer."

Senior Peyton Dacy, juniors Lindsey Osterburg and Mackenzie Resch, and sophomore Brynn LeFevre have been taking turns on the back line and doing an outstanding job for the Gators.

"We have moved a couple kids around from last year and that has really helped us in the middle of the pitch as well," McCaughn said. "We now need to finish in our attacking third of the field. We are getting good opportunities, just not able to finish."

Sophomore Sydney Kroenig is thriving in an attacking mid role.

"She has really controlled that part of the field for us," McCaughn said. "She is improving every week and is becoming an offensive threat."

Sweeper success goes forward:

West Aurora senior Krystal Diaz has no idea how many scoring chances she has negated during her playing days with the Blackhawks, but she had never scored for her team.

That changed in a big way in a 6-1 victory at Romeoville on April 6 as Diaz was moved from the back line to forward and scored three goals in about a six-minute span. They were her first goals in high school play.

"I move my girls around all the time and sometimes I need someone at a certain position," Blackhawks coach Laura Wagley said. "As soon as she scored her first goal and said it was her first goal it was like, 'No way,' but she has played sweeper for me. It was really awesome and a lot of fun to see her score."