

# Snow place like home

## Lady Thunderbirds win GNC opener over Mosinee in wintry conditions

**Brett LaBore**  
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

The Lakeland girls' soccer team already overcame snowy conditions once this season when they shoveled off IncredibleBank Field two weeks ago. This time, they played in blizzard-like conditions in their Great Northern Conference opener.

The Thunderbirds defeated Mosinee 4-0 in 60 minutes Thursday night.

"Starting out with 1-0 win in conference is exciting and sets the tone for the rest of the conference games," coach Stephanie Hartzheim said. "The girls know that

every game is important, but conference games have a different meaning behind it."

The snow began to fall amidst high winds as the game began at IncredibleBank Field. Both teams adjusted to the conditions as a total of one goal was scored in the half.

"The wind and snow in the face made it hard to see. The defense did a great job distributing the balls to the midfielders and forward to keep it on their half," Hartzheim said. "We had great passing going on in the first half even though they could not always see in front of them."

Lakeland had their chances in the first half.

Josie Wentland passed it to Taylor Heleniak who then set up Sophia Myshchysyn for a shot on goal, saved by Mosinee goalkeeper Jessica Brown.

Olivia Melka then took a shot on goal where Heleniak nearly had the rebound. Brown pounced on the ball for the save.

At 17:10, the Thunderbirds had four straight corner kicks. The best look came off the foot of defender Jenna Whitman who took a shot saved by Brown.

Mosinee's best chance at a goal came around the 27:10 mark. Hallie Kramer made a run at the goal, but was thwarted by Lakeland's defense.

Leah Wolfe was close to scoring on multiple occasions. She finally got one to go in right before the half ended. She shot it high from the top of the box, out of the reach of Brown at 38:54. Myshchysyn got the assist and Lakeland carried a 1-0 lead into halftime.

"Leah's goal at the end of the first half was huge. Leah and Sophia had a great connection to make it happen. We had many shots the first half, but needed a play just like that one to find the back of the net," Hartzheim said. "We also did not know if the refs would call it after the first half. Being able to have one goal would have still have us the win."

Snow was now piling up at IncredibleBank Field. It was difficult just to be able to see the sidelines.

As the snow fell, the Thunderbirds had the best half of the game. They scored three times, all started by Wolfe once again.

"The girls came out strong given the circumstances of all the snow. They really had to focus to make sure they had the right amount of power behind passes and body in front of the ball for control," Hartzheim said.

Wolfe scored her second goal of the game at 44:38, assisted by Melka. It gave Lakeland a 2-0 lead.

Then, Heleniak scored off of a corner kick. Wentland was awarded the assist and



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Sarah Poisson makes a play on the ball in Lakeland's Great Northern Conference opener against Mosinee Thursday, April 14 at IncredibleBank Field in Minocqua.



BRETT LABORE/LAKELAND TIMES

Maria Gironella dribbles with the ball in Lakeland's Great Northern Conference opener against Mosinee Thursday, April 14 at IncredibleBank Field in Minocqua.

Lakeland led 3-0.

"Taylor has a drive that doesn't stop until the ball is at the back of the net. We tell the girls that it doesn't matter how the ball gets into the net as long as it's not with their hands," Hartzheim said. "Taylor has done a great job following the ball to make that happen."

Myshchysyn and Heleniak both made a run at goal at the 53-minute mark. It ended up being Heleniak who scored on a rebound, her second goal of the game.

The Thunderbirds were in full control, leading 4-0. They ended up outshooting Mosinee 27-0 in the win.

"(The girls) did a great job switching the ball and finding feet when they could," Hartzheim said. "We were able to put a few more goals

in the back of the net which was our goal since we knew we would not get the full half to play."

The game ended up being called at the 60-minute mark for safety reasons.

"The refs did not think it was safe to play and the lines were hard to see. It was the refs decision to call the game," Hartzheim said.

Lakeland hosted non-conference Hayward on Monday. Coverage of that game will be in the Friday, April 22 edition of *The Times*.

Up next, the Thunderbirds (3-1, 1-0) host Northland Pines Thursday, April 21 in their second GNC game of the year. The game is set to start at 5 p.m.

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## Lakeland's Jakob Craig commits to Lindenwood University for cycling

**Brett LaBore**  
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

One might know of Lakeland Union High School senior Jakob Craig for his skiing abilities. He also specializes in cycling, recently committing to a top cycling school for college.

Craig signed with Lindenwood University in Saint Charles, Missouri on Monday. He's earned both a cycling and tuition scholarship.

"I'll be competing in mountain biking prima-

rily so that'll start in the fall. (I'm) also doing cyclocross in November and into December so that's a different discipline," he said.

Craig's love for cycling started with his dad who taught him to bike.

"My dad raced pro overseas in Europe and he really helped get me into cycling," he said.

"He taught me how to ride a bike when I was three and the day I got my training wheels off... that's where my

love for mountain biking started."

Craig has raced in both the summer and the fall. In the fall, he raced as a part of the Rhinelander Northwoods Composite Mountain Bike team.

"My fall high school series was the majority of college recognition I got. That's how I got recruited and stuff like that," he said.

The Rhinelander Northwoods Composite Mountain Bike team is comprised of

Rhinelander, Three Lakes, Eagle River and Lakeland. He moved to varsity his sophomore year.

"(It's) a large team of about 30 people. That was always really fun," he said. "I've raced with them since I was in seventh grade. (I was) coached by Jon Lester out of Three Lakes and he is a professional road cyclist and he has many accolades to his name. (He was) really essential in my cycling career, especially my later years

in high school."

"I would say my athletic career was really brought up by Jon Lester and my dad Jeff Craig," he said. "I think they both, with Jon being one of my coaches, really (helped) my performance and so did my dad with his extensive background."

Craig has won a combined seven state titles across all the disciplines — road, cycle and mountain biking. He took fourth in the varsity boys' division and placed

fourth in the final standings at the Wisconsin High School Cycling League Division 2 state championships in October.

Craig has also raced in the NICA (National Interscholastic Cycling Association) since the sixth grade.

"A lot of people really just focus on one discipline, but I kind of explored all of them and found success in the majority of them but moun-

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