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UIS notes: Women's soccer squad hopes to turn close calls into victories

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The University of Illinois Springfield Prairie Stars women's soccer team is hoping to turn a string of close losses into victories.

The Stars have lost four straight matches by a single goal, which includes a 4-3 defeat last Friday to Missouri-St. Louis and 2-1 overtime loss to Maryville on Sunday.

"After the game Friday, I hadn't seen a team that excited," UIS women's soccer coach Pete Kowall said. "They certainly worked hard and good enough to score some goals.

"We have gotten better. In both games, we had chances to score. We haven't quite gotten over the hump."

It's a far cry from the 2009 season when UIS went 2-14 and scored only 11 goals, but Kowall wants more than moral victories.

"This is about mental toughness and getting things right," he said.

UIS (0-6) has a pair of home matches against Kentucky Wesleyan at 5 p.m. Friday and Southern Indiana at noon Sunday.

Still on the hunt

When it comes to near-miss losses, the women's soccer team has company.

The men's squad has not yet gotten over the hump. In a span of five games, UIS has tied Missouri S&T 0-0 in overtime plus lost to Rockhurst 2-1, Drury 1-0 and Maryville 2-0 most recently on Sunday.

In the Maryville contest, UIS gave up the second goal with eight seconds remaining in regulation after a risk-taking move by UIS mens' soccer coach Chad Jones.

"I pushed the guys up, pulled the goalkeeper and had him way up on the top of the 18-yard box," Jones said. "We went for the goal. We had a couple corner kicks that we did very well on and we had opportunities in the last 38 seconds.

"My mentality wasn't losing 1-0. It was maybe tying 1-1, getting to overtime and getting a win."

The Stars (0-5-1 overall, 0-4-1 in the GLVC) host Kentucky Wesleyan Friday at 7:30 p.m. and Southern Indiana Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

Headed for home

The UIS volleyball team's season-opening 13-match road swing is coming to an end.

The Stars have only two remaining matches before they take the court at home for the first time this season. They play at Wisconsin-Parkside Friday evening and at Lewis Saturday afternoon.

UIS opens the season at The Recreation and Athletic Center against the Benedictine University at Springfield Bulldogs Tuesday at 7 p.m.

"I am so excited," UIS coach Angie Riggle said. "We've had our chances to be away. They now want to come home. The excitement of being on the road has died down."

Playing away from home the first four weeks is not an ideal situation. The Stars have a 3-8 record through the first 11 matches.

"One area we really worked on is we have to do a better job of pushing each other and pushing their own selves," Riggle said. "That's a big concentration. Just holding teammates accountable and yourself accountable."

Stars' new website debuts

UIS has updated and relaunched its athletics website.

The site has a new URL, www.uisprairiestars.com, and a new look. Rosters and schedules are available for the majority of the men's and women's teams.

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