

Argos bow out of National Championship Tournament

ORANGE BEACH, Ala. - The University of Great Falls Men's Soccer Team fell to # 6 Grand View University of Des Moines, Iowa 5-2.

The task before the Argos was to beat the # 11 ranked team in the first round of the 2011 NAIA National Soccer Tournament. They accomplished that by beating Concordia University of Oregon 3-2 in regulation in Portland on Nov. 19th. Next the Argos had to bus, due to lack of flight availability, to Orange Beach, Ala. The long trip included a Thanksgiving meal served out of coolers on the bus and Black Friday shopping in Kansas City.

Next on the agenda was to play the # 6 ranked team in the nation. The game began at 5:00 pm CDT. The Vikings scored the first goal in the first five minutes. The next goal was shortly after that. The 3rd goal was from 35 yards that appeared to bend up and away from Argo keeper Zach Johnson and strike in the upper 90 of the goal. The 4th goal of the half was score by Grand View. The Argos were down 4-0 at the mid-way point in the game.

In Great Falls approximately 75 students, faculty and staff packed into the University Commons to watch the web cast of the game. The home crowd cheered with every break the Argos had and jeered with every goal the Vikings scored.

The second half was an entirely different story. "I felt we played better than they did in the second half" Argo coach Paul Zazenski said. The Argos scored early as senior Ryan O'Neil tallied his 20th goal of the season on a 17 yard shot that found the back of the Vikings net. David Jimenez scored next to cut the Vikings lead in half. The crowd in the commons standing and cheering with each Argo goal. The Argonaut determination even caught the attention of the web cast play-by-play announcer.

The Argo drive and momentum shift was stopped and the Vikings scored the 5th and final goal of the contest. "We could have been shell-shocked, hung our heads in disappointment and given up after the first half but we didn't." Zazenski commented. The game proved, thus far, to be the highest scoring game of the tournament. "We simply had to big of a hill to climb back up." Zazenski added.

"Despite the loss today I am really proud of our guys. We played today like we have all year with a never give up attitude." Zazenski said. Except for the final score the game stats were very even; Shots - Grand View took 20, the Argos 19. Shots on Goal - Grand View 9 to the Argos 8. Corner kicks - the Argos had 5 to the Vikings 4.

The Argos finish the season with a 16-5 record, winning the conference championship for the second consecutive year and making their second straight appearance in the sweet-16 of the National Tournament. Overall it was a great season for the Argonaut team and second year Head Coach Paul Zazenski.