

BOYLE

Continued from A8

That’s what Deem will be looking for. The outcome was never in doubt Wednesday at Rebel Stadium, but he said the Lady Rebels were a bit “stagnant” in the first half before putting Garrard away in the second.

“We talked about it at halftime and I encouraged them and also, you know, redirected them firmly,” Deem said. “But I thought we did a really good job in the second half. It’s hard when you’re competing against people that are putting seven, eight in the box, and everyone expects it to be a certain way.”

Ellery Taylor scored in the opening seconds for Boyle, and Maggie Burke, Claire Combs and Reagan Britt had two goals each.

Garrard (12-4-2), which advances to the regional for the second time in three years, trailed 6-0



Stella Thompson (27) of Boyle County prepares to kick the ball past Garrard County's Delia Morris as Boyle's Mia Kilby looks on during the first half Wednesday.

when Kenedy Rayburn scored its only goal in the 71st minute.

Boyle rose from No. 6 in the penultimate poll to No. 1 this week after posting road wins over then-No. 1 Sacred Heart and then-No. 8 Central Hardin last week.

The Lady Rebels have won 19 straight games, and they went 6-0-1 against teams that finished the regular season in the top 25, defeating

Henry Clay, Bardstown, duPont Manual and Calloway County in addition to their two wins last week.

The only game they didn’t win was the third game of the season, when they tied Marshall County 1-1 on the second half of a back-to-back in Owensboro.

Polls mean nothing now that the postseason has begun, but Deem and his players are comfort-

able with being No. 1 and with the target it puts on their backs.

“Pressure is a privilege, and these kids have worked extremely hard to get this program where

it’s at,” Deem said. “And I tell them, ‘You need to embrace this, but you also need to respect the game and respect the fact that you’re going to be dealing with everyone wanting to pull the upset. It just comes with the territory.’”

Leffew said the Lady Rebels will be on their guard.

“I say just keep respecting the other teams, play our best, play every game like it’s our last and just play for each other and play as one,” she said. “We are a family, and at the end of the day it’s what matters. We’re playing for each other.”

The final word on which is the No. 1 team in Kentucky will be spoken in three weeks at the state

finals. If Boyle has an opportunity to be heard from then, they said it will be because they recognize where they need to improve between now and then.

“We need our teammates to help pick us up, and that’s what we’ve (been) really good at this year ... because we are there for each other,” Leffew said.

ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

Reagan Britt, Claire Combs, Braylee Leffew and Ellery Taylor, Boyle County; Eva Elleman, Paisley Poynter and Ava Warren, Garrard County; Alyssa Dilbeck and Ellie Pennington, Danville; Mia Bodner and Gracie Mink, Lincoln County.



Boyle County players celebrate Wednesday after receiving the trophy for their fifth consecutive 45th District championship.



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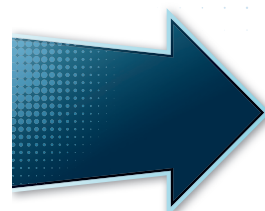
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