

Sports

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Braves are runners up in MAG Cup soccer tournament

BY JACKSON UTTER
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On Saturday, Sept. 12, the Grant County Braves boys' soccer team hosted the 2026 MAG tournament. Playing two games, the boys faced both Williamstown and Portland Christian School. After battling the Demons and Eagles, the Braves took runner-up in the tournament. Following a 2-0 victory over their cross-town rivals, Grant was defeated in a 2-1 matchup by Portland Christian.

Kicking off the tournament against Williamstown, the Braves faced the Demons once again. In a rematch at Grant's home field, Williamstown was bested for a second time in the season. After the 6-2 loss earlier in the season, Williamstown lost in a more drawn-out battle against the Braves. Facing off in the competition, the Demons' offense struggled to find opportunities to score.

Across the first half, Grant remained on the offensive, with Williamstown forced to continuously defend. Despite this pressure, the Demons doggedly resisted for 20 minutes. It wasn't until an own goal in the first half that Williamstown's defense was finally breached.

This drawn-out fight then proceeded into the second half, with the Braves repeatedly probing. However, this persistence from Grant would prove successful as Jack Mulberry made it 2-0. Thanks to a corner kick by Hunter Wilson, Mulberry headed the ball past the keeper.

Although Williamstown briefly forced the Braves back afterwards, they



Melissa Muse

Jaxton Parsons executes a leaping header in Grant County's MAG Cup match against Williamstown.



Melissa Muse

Tucker Mullins dribbles downfield in the Braves match against Williamstown in the MAG Cup.

were unable to return the favor.

Contrasting Grant's offensive dominance, the Demons only had a handful of attempts on goal. These scarce challenges were nonetheless halted by Jagger Gambrell in goal. Solidifying their win over the Demons for a second time, the Braves then advanced in the tournament.

For the second game

against Portland Christian, the Braves faced much tougher competition. With the game against the 9-7 Eagles turning into a very physical and heated matchup, Grant came out slow. Early in the show-down, the Braves allowed Portland Christian to take the lead.

Before the Braves had found their footing, they

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Hard-fought defensive battle ends in loss to Pendleton Co.

BY JACKSON UTTER
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During their fifth game of the season, the Grant County Braves football team played Pendleton County. After a slow, defensive war against the Wildcats, the Braves were beaten at home once again. Although Grant managed to score first blood against their opponents, Pendleton mounted a comeback in the final quarter to capture the victory.

In this clash between play styles, Grant's rushing game butted heads with the Wildcats' passing. Prior to Friday night's game, Pendleton had passed for 678 yards and eight touchdowns. Meanwhile, the Braves worked their way down the field with 231 rushing yards, primarily led by Kolt Fannin.

The defenses also boasted drastically different statistics, with Pendleton earning 236 tackles compared to Grant's 73. Regardless of the difference on paper, the Braves defense would go toe to toe with the Wildcats.

Across the first half, both sides sat in a stalemate as neither surrendered a goal. Though Grant and Pendleton both nearly managed to score throughout the first two

quarters, they were repeatedly turned away at the last moment.

Trading drives, the game slowly progressed without any breakthrough until near the end of the third quarter. Shortly after an excellent stop by the Braves' defense, the Wildcats quarterback shattered the delicate defensive balance. From deep inside their own half, the Wildcats' quarterback launched a 50-yard Hail Mary pass.

This desperate bid did find a Wildcat receiver, who ran past the final Braves defender and into the end zone. However, Grant caught a lucky break as a penalty on the Wildcat's QB overturned the touchdown and forced them to punt.

Having lost the first touchdown of the night, Pendleton's situation only worsened afterwards.

Making a great play on defense, the invigorated Braves blocked the subsequent punt attempt. Winning the ball on the Wildcats' 14-yard line, Grant pulled the rug out from under Pendleton. After Fannin rushed for a 12-yard first down, the Braves sat only yards away.

Not to be deterred, Grant quickly finished up the drive with Fannin making it 6-0. In a hard-fought battle, the Braves

were able to secure the upper hand heading into the fourth quarter. The breakthrough play in the third, however, wouldn't mark the end of the competition. Following nearly three full quarters of defensive war, the dam was finally broken.

With this flurry from the Braves, the Wildcats finally began to capitalize on gaps in the stalwart Grant. Unloading on offense, Pendleton slowly built steam and marched down the field.

Before Grant could settle in and slow the advance, the Wildcats secured a touchdown of their own. This marked the downfall of the Braves as their hard-fought performance crumbled in the final quarter.

Shortly after a halted drive from Grant, Pendleton grew their lead. As the fourth quarter approached its end, the Wildcats scored once more to make it 15-6. Having taken the lead and responded with contempt to the first breakthrough, Pendleton prevailed on the 18th.

In a bitter loss after a hard-fought battle, the Braves' losing streak persisted. Locking horns with the Wildcats' defense, Grant fell short to the final burst by Pendleton's offense.



Melissa Muse

Regan Kenner works to get control of the ball during a MAG Cup match.



Melissa Muse

Sierra Spahr fights to win the ball in the Lady Braves' game against Carroll County in the MAG Cup.

Lady Braves soccer team stalls out mid-September

BY JACKSON UTTER
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Over the second week of September, the Grant County Lady Braves soccer team fell into a rough patch. Following a great win over Calvary Christian, the Lady Braves went 0-3 in their next three games. This included their two annual MAG Cup games; as the host of the tournament they landed third place. Grant then wrapped up the week's games with a district seed matchup against the Walton Verona Bearcats.

The first of the three games was against Carroll County early on the 12th. During the game, the Panthers got the best of the Lady Braves, managing to score twice. With Grant losing the battle in the midfield, they struggled to contain Carroll's offense. This, combined with costly mistakes from Grant, allowed their opponents to secure the win over the hosting team.

Next up, the Lady Braves battled against Shelby County in the second round of the MAG Cup tournament. Facing the Rockets on their home turf, Grant was dealt another difficult loss. Though Grant managed to strike against the Rockets' defense, they were outmatched in a clash of offenses.

In the Lady Braves' last game of the MAG tournament, they allowed four goals to the Panthers. Unable to turn back Rockets passes through their backline, Grant was beaten. Only earning limited chances to counterattack their opponent's defense, the lead was kept out of the Grant's reach.

Despite their efforts to combat Shelby's momentum, Grant fell short once again. After capitalizing on the Rockets resting on their laurels, the Lady Braves made it 4-1 by the close of the game. Although Grant's efforts recovered some lost ground, it was already too late. In the lopsided showing, Shelby secured their win over Grant. The Rockets then went on to win the tournament after they also beat Carroll.

The final game of the week fea-



Melissa Muse

Aly Brown boots the ball during a MAG Cup game.

tured the Lady Braves playing the Bearcats. To determine both sides' placement in the 32nd district, Grant and Walton faced off on Monday evening. Unfortunately, this game would continue Grant's losing streak.

Trailing their losses over the week-end, Grant struggled to break through the Bearcats' defensive lines. Trading blows with Walton, the game's outcome was decided by a single goal. Whereas the previous games saw the Lady Braves unable to find chances to score, this game saw them earn some shots.

Yet Walton's offense still possessed its dangerous claws, which eventually tore through the defenses. In a heated fight between both sides, the Bearcats stretched out a thin advantage. At 1-0, the game slowly trickled by in a scoring stalemate.

Walton Verona was successful in halting the Braves counterattacks. Falling into the third seed, the Lady Braves have now suffered losses to both of their district opponents. This game also makes Grant 5-7 for the season, marking the longest losing streak yet in the season.