

Sports

Prep gets card pulled in loss

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Soccer: Elby is lost for match after drawing red card, leaving Rebels down.

By Gabriel Rizk

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LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE — Trailing by just a goal early in the second half, the Flintridge Prep girls' soccer team was still very much in its nonleague match against La Cañada on Tuesday.

But with about 35 minutes left in the match, thanks to a red-card ejection, sophomore forward Brook Elby was out of the game, and so were the Rebels.

Down a player, one of its best no less, for the remainder of the contest, Prep couldn't do much to cut into the Spartans' lead. La Cañada added a goal in the 53rd minute to secure its advantage and send the Rebels to a 3-1 road loss days before their Prep League opener, a meeting with Pasadena Poly that will be no easier without the services of Elby.



Flintridge Prep's Brooke Elby battles La Canada's Amanda Teng for the ball on Tuesday. (Roger Wilson/News-Press)

"She's arguably the best player on the team, especially offensively," Prep assistant Sean Beattie, who filled in for Esteban Chavez on Tuesday, said of Elby, "so [her ejection] takes away a lot of our offense. [She's also] a girl that's got speed and can get back and help out defensively and then she pushes up front.

"Then you're playing against a really good team one man down. ...What's huge is missing her for Poly on Thursday."

Five minutes into the second half, Elby was battling several Spartans for control of a ball deep in the Rebels' corner on the right side of the field.

The play was whistled dead and the far-side official ran the width of the field to issue Elby a red card for a slide tackle from behind.

"I understand that it could have been a foul, but a red card wasn't necessary," said Elby, who scored the Rebels' lone goal, on a penalty kick in the 30th minute. "I guess it was the judgement of the ref that kind of overshadowed the day — there's nothing I can do about it, anyway."

The Rebels (3-4) managed only a couple of shots over the final 35 minutes, while limiting the Spartans (2-1-1) to just a handful themselves, including just one shot on goal.

Unfortunately for Prep, that shot was a header by Caroline Na off a free kick by Kelly Clark that put La Cañada up, 3-1, with 27 minutes to play.

"Giving up one goal in that time, I thought they played outstanding," Beattie said.

The first half saw Prep begin to make a comeback after allowing two early La Cañada goals.

In the fifth minute, Rachel Ragusa set up Holly Schreckengast out of a corner kick and the sophomore defender bent a long shot from the right corner over Prep goalkeeper Stephanie Bathke (two saves).

Three minutes later, Ragusa, dribbling up the middle, found Milly Beebee streaking unmarked up the right side from about 20 yards out for her second assist of the game.

The Rebels limited the Spartans to just one shot on goal for the rest of the half, getting a chance to cut the deficit to 2-1 when Elby drew a foul in the penalty box and beat Spartans goalkeeper Haley Austin to the right.

"I definitely think it affected everyone," Elby said of her ejection's impact on the Rebels' comeback attempt. "Everyone was so confused and I was just very frustrated."

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