

Prep soccer: Regular season hits home stretch

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With the high school soccer regular season entering the home stretch, three parish teams are a lock to make the playoffs — the Airline boys and the Benton boys and girls teams.

The big game this week is a Tuesday night District 1, Division I boys game at Lee Hedges Stadium between Airline (23-2, 9-1) and Caddo Magnet (14-6-1, 7-1).

Magnet won the first district game between the two 1-0 on Dec. 10. Airline star Patrick Laurent suffered a season-ending broken leg in that game.

Despite not having played since then, Laurent is still tied for the top scorer in the area with teammate Matt Hanisee. Both have 22 goals.

Airline's Chris Galvin is the No. 3 scorer in the area with 20. Magnet's top scorer is Cameron Kadkhodai with 11. Galvin also has 19 assists, tying him for first with Magnet's Tim Kunkel.

The Vikings have reeled off eight straight wins since the loss to Magnet. The Mustang's only district loss was to Parkway 2-1 on Jan. 7.

Airline can clinch at least a share of the district title with a victory. The Vikings will still likely have to defeat Parkway in the regular-season finale on Jan. 28 to win the title outright.

The first- and second-place teams in each of the nine districts in Division I qualify for the 32-team playoffs. The remaining 14 spots will be filled with wild-card teams with the first criterium for selection being won-loss percentage in district play.

Based on that, Parkway (12-8-2, 6-4), currently fourth in the district, will have a very good shot at making the playoffs.

In District 1-I girls, Parkway (11-8-3, 5-3) and Airline (11-12, 6-4) will have to make the playoffs as wild-card teams.

For all intents and purposes, Benton won the District 1-II girls title with a 3-1 victory over Calvary last Thursday night.

The Lady Tigers (8-3-3, 5-0) face Northwood, a team they defeated 12-0 in the first district meeting, on Wednesday. They are also scheduled to play doubleheader against winless Woodlawn on Feb. 8.

Shelby Plunkett leads Benton with 15 goals.

The Benton boys (9-9-0, 4-2) finished second in District 1-I after falling to Calvary 2-0 Thursday. The Tigers have three non-district games left.

Benton's Dillon Rogers ranks fifth in the area with 16 goals.

The Bossier boys and girls teams close out District 1-III play against Evangel tonight.

The Bossier girls (4-6, 2-5) lost to Loyola 8-0 and Evangel 2-0 last week.

Bossier goalkeeper Alyssa Tuggle had 11 saves against Loyola.