

PREP SOCCER — MSAC BOYS CHAMPIONSHIP

# HURRICANE SHUTS DOWN HUNTINGTON FOR TITLE



F. BRIAN FERGUSON | Gazette-Mail

## Lester's second-half goals, tight defense carry Redskins to 2-0 victory

By Ryan Pritt  
Staff writer

HURRICANE — Entering Wednesday night's Mountain State Athletic Conference championship game against Huntington, Hurricane had yielded just nine goals over 17 games, with four of those coming in a 4-2 loss to the Highlanders on Sept. 15.

"Don't think that they didn't remember they gave up four goals," Hurricane boys soccer coach Jim Dagostine deadpanned after the game.

To say the least, the Redskins were a little better this time around, holding Huntington (12-6-2) without a shot on goal. Two late scores from Drake Lester were plenty to earn Hurricane a 2-0 win over the Highlanders and the MSAC boys crown.

Dagostine minimized the importance of the league championship itself with sectionals looming next week, but admitted the biggest part of Wednesday's win was re-establishing control within that sectional tournament against a team the Redskins may well see a third time very soon.

"There's no doubt in my mind ours is the toughest sectional in the state," Dagostine said. "For us, it was important tonight. When we played them the first time they really wore us out. It was important we came back tonight and were competitive, and we were."

The Redskins (16-2) controlled things from the outset Wednesday, outshooting Huntington 6-0 in the first half.

But despite several golden opportunities, Hurricane came up empty, thanks in large part to a spirited performance from Highlanders goalie Dylan Shultz.

As chances go begging,

the only places the Redskin tightened up were in the mic field and on the back end as the Highlanders could find no room to maneuver.

"Drew Smith, one of our assistants, scouts well," Dagostine said. "We looked at some things and tried to shore up some things ... they really got after us down there. They dominated us from the time started until the time it was over with. I'm just glad we could make some adjustments hang in there and look a little better."

Huntington fared a little better in the first portion of the second half in terms of holding possession, but never seriously threatened.

Finally, with 10:08 remaining Ryan Fisher launched a come kick that Lester got his head or pushing it past Shultz to provide the Redskins a sigh of relief. By the time he connects again just 1:43 later, this time off a helper from Alik Ass Hurricane was well on its way.

"I felt really good about because it put the stress off our shoulders," Lester said. "We were 0-0 and there were less than 20 minutes left and didn't want to go into overtime. We were off last game and I think we needed that loss to come out into this game and play really hard."

For Lester, it marked five goals in the Redskins' last two games after he netted a hat trick in a 4-0 win over Greer brier East on Monday.

"Drake is a good player, he is a very natural scorer," Dagostine said. "Some kids have a knack of being around the ball and the goal and finish and he does."

"The second goal was big. It gave us the room that we needed."

Shultz finished with eight