



# Winter Sports Corner

## Heises making an immediate impact on Gray Collegiate soccer

BY TERRY WARD  
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Gray Collegiate Academy boys' soccer is off to a fast start.

The War Eagles won the Capital City Cup Silver Division Sunday, going 5-0 for new head soccer coach Kevin Heise.

Heise brings a Hall of Fame resume to the school from Brookland-Cayce High School. With the Bearcats from 1991-2016, Heise compiled a record of 454-172-26 and is one of 16 members of the South Carolina High School Soccer Coaches Association's Hall of Fame.

The Gray Collegiate Academy girls' team is coached by Emily Heise, Kevin's wife. She also arrives from Brookland-Cayce after leading the Lady Bearcats to the Region 5-3A title and Class 3A state runner-up.

Kevin Heise is optimistic about his team in his initial season at Gray Collegiate. During the Cup, the War Eagles posted wins over Lugoff-Elgin; Swansea, Buford, Columbia and Sumter in the final and outscored its opponents in the five games 22-2.

"We have veteran players who know our system," Heise said. "They are on the same page. They are here for the right reasons. It's a good group and they are very committed to what we do, and they are disciplined."

With 14 seniors on his team, Heise has a group who "know what we expect." He also called his team a "fun group."

Heise said Spencer Ayen has been "phenomenal" in the War Eagles' five games. Ayen, a forward/striker, has scored 12 goals, scoring four in Gray' Collegiate's 5-0 win



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Gray Collegiate soccer coach Kevin Heise calls out to a player recently. Both Kevin and his wife, Emily Heise, have already made big splashes in their inaugural year at Gray.

Sunday over 5A Sumter.

Ayen, a senior and fourth-year student at GCA, is one of three captains. The other two, Noah Davis and Luis Lopez, have played for Heise for six years.

"They are good kids who lead by example," he said of his captains.

Heise said his team has played a lot of soccer in February to prepare for the season. Gray Collegiate faces Batesburg-Leesville Thursday before opening Region 3-2A play the following week.

Heise said his team will play at several college cam-

pus tournaments in order to expose his players to more college coaches.

The Lady War Eagles went 2-1 in the South Beltline Tournament.

"Our team is missing some starters due to injuries," Emily Heise said. "When we get them back, we'll be OK."

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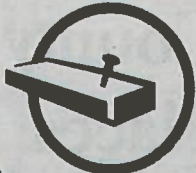
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