

# Blue Raiders Play to 1-1 Tie

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## **BOWLING GREEN, Ky. -**

Freshman Rebecca Rodriguez beat her defender and the keeper to score in the 81st minute and tie the match, as Middle Tennessee and Western Kentucky played to a 1-1 tie in two overtimes Friday night. The home team scored early in the second half, but Middle Tennessee continued pressuring and got the tying score from Rodriguez, her 10th of the season. Early in the second half WKU (8-5-2, 3-1-2 SBC) got a chance to take the lead, but missed by a matter of inches. A bouncing ball at the top of the box was knocked away by Blue Raider keeper Danielle Perreault and

right to Lady Topper Crystal Chapon, who chipped it toward the net. But the ball hit the left post and was cleared out by Middle Tennessee. On the ensuing corner kick, Erica Baker redirected a bouncing ball past the far post by Perreault for a 1-0 home team advantage in the 57th minute. For the final 33 minutes of the half, the Blue Raiders (9-6-1, 4-1-1) put on a constant barrage against the WKU defense, continually pressuring the goal. A pair of corner kicks trickles across the top of the box without a good hit, but the Blue Raiders finally were able to crack through in the 81st minute. Defender Katy Rayburn cleared a ball long down the leftside that Rodriguez tracked down. Rodriguez beat her defender and lofted her shot over the head of WKU keeper Melissa Bailey for the game-tying score. Middle Tennessee continued to pressure the defense, peppering the net with shots, including a blast off the foot of Laura Miguez that hit the crossbar in the 88th minute. Neither team scored in regulation, and the two squads headed to overtime with the match tied at one, Middle Tennessee second straight OT outing. In the overtime Western Kentucky had the better chances in the first 10 minutes but could not get a shot on goal. In the second OT, the Blue Raiders had a chance deep, as Laura Miguez took a shot from deep in the box that was deflected and went off the head of teammate Emily Carter, as Bailey was out of the net. But the header floated just right of the net, keeping the score tied. Neither team could muster many quality offensive chances in the first half, though the Blue Raiders had the best of the bunch. On three occasions Middle Tennessee got off good crosses deep into the box, with one cleared and two hopping over the feet of Blue Raiders streaking toward the net. Western Kentucky had a pair of good chances, with one ball almost coming to a stop less than 10 yards from the goal early in the half, and Perreault making the save on a shot

from 15 yards. Middle Tennessee outshot the home team, 19-7, including 11-8 in the second half. Perreault made five saves, while Bailey had a dozen saves for Western Kentucky. Middle Tennessee concludes its home season Sunday at 1 p.m. against Samford. Five Blue Raider seniors will play their final home match in the last nonconference tilt of the season.

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