Freshmen enjoy firsts in road win

Blue Raiders notch 2-0 triumph

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HUNTSVILLE, Ala. - Career firsts were the theme as Middle Tennessee's soccer team registered its first shutout of the season and secured a gutsy 2-0 win against Alabama A&M here Sunday afternoon. Kelly Downs' first career goal proved to be the game-winner and Kela Casiple received her first career start and responded with a shutout and her first career win as the Blue Raiders (3-2-1) notched their first road win this season. "This was a tough, hard-fought win and I'm pleased with the way our players responded after the tough match at Alabama Friday," Middle Tennessee coach Aston Rhoden said. "It was good to see some of the young players step up and make such significant contributions in the road win. It should only help their confidence as well as the confidence of our entire team." Downs took a well-placed pass from Caitlin Reeves and drilled it past the keeper for her first career goal and a 1-0 Middle Tennessee lead in the 17th minute. Defense was the story the remainder of the half as neither team would score the rest of the way. Alabama did not pose too much of a threat in the first half with no shots in the first 45 minutes but it was strong on defense to keep in the match. Kala Morgan's third goal of the season in the 56th minute came off an assist from Kim Farrant and provided insurance and a 2-0 lead. Casiple made the lead stand, finishing with eight saves and notching her first career shutout. The Blue Raiders return to action when they participate in the Oklahoma Soccer Classic next weekend.

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