Blue Raiders fall 3-2 to High Point

Go down three goals but can not complete comeback

September 7, 2008 · David Powell

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee fell victim to an early goal and could not complete a dramatic comeback in the second half as they fell 3-2 to the High Point Panthers to conclude the Middle Tennessee Classic at Blue Raider Field on Sunday afternoon. The Blue Raiders were coming off a battling display in the first game of the Classic on Friday night against the Texas Tech Red Raiders. The home side went ahead in the first half through a Shan Jones strike before allowing the equalizer late in the second half in the 1-1 draw. High Point defeated Alabama A&M in their first game of the tournament on Friday and saw they go ahead just 13 seconds into the match off a wild set of events. Panther forward Kelly Farrell saw her drive strike off the fingertips of Blue Raider goalkeeper Erynn Murray and then bounce off the cross bar and back into the field of play. Sara Rager tucked home the shot from five yards out before Murray could recover to the ball. Despite going behind, the Blue Raiders spent much of the first half controlling possession but went down 2-0 in the 15th minute against the run of play. A Kelly Farrell out-swinging corner kick from the far side was met by Laura Eldridge, whose well-placed header was put between two Blue Raider defenders and into the back of the net. Middle Tennessee's effectiveness began to wear down as the half approached and the home side began forcing hopeful balls forward looking to pull a goal back before the break. High Point took a 3-0 lead in the 59th minute on a goal by Karra Damascus. A miscommunication on a cross between the Blue Raider backline and substitute

goalkeeper Kela Casiple led to a bouncing ball in the box and Damascus tucking home an easy strike from seven yards. Vanessa Mueggler was on hand to pull a goal back for the home side just seven seconds later, beating High Point goalkeeper Andrea Ritchie from 30 yards for her second goal of the season. Middle Tennessee settled down and began to threaten the opposition goal as the match progressed but it was the Panthers who almost widened their advantage in the 62nd minute if not for a timely clearance off the line by Blue Raider defender Emily Snowdon. Highpoint was on hand to clear one off the line for themselves in the 66th minute before freshman Laura Lamberth's hard strike went off the cross bar and over the goal leaving the deficit remaining at two. The Blue Raiders made it a one-goal game in the 76th minute when midfielder Hope Suominen received a ball with her back to goal in the center of the field. The midfielder turned just in time to find Jones making a streaking run into box and the forward calmly finished the clever throughball for her team-leading third goal of the season. Despite a flurry of chances towards the end, Middle Tennessee could not find the equalizer as they remained winless on the season. The Blue Raiders return to action on Friday when they travel to Tulsa, Okla. to face the Tulsa Golden Hurricane in the first game of the Tulsa Soccer Classic. Kickoff is slated for 7 PM. **2008 Middle Tennessee Classic All-Tournament Team** *Shan Jones, Middle Tennessee*
Fran Howells, Middle Tennessee
Vanessa Mueggler, Middle Tennessee
Karra Damascus, High Point
Taylor Ray, High Point
Laura Eldrige, High Point
Joslyn Jackson, Alabama A&M
Belinda Kanda, Alabama A&M
LeTisha Davis, Alabama A&M
Tina Rincon, Texas Tech
Taylor Lytle, Texas Tech
Kendyl Mygatt, Texas Tech

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