

Blue Raiders score 1-0 victory over UALR

Clinch fifth win in Sun Belt Conference play

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Middle Tennessee capitalized off a cornerkick midway through the second half and held strong over intense pressure in the closing minutes as they rebounded from their first loss in Sun Belt Conference play with a 1-0 shutout of the UALR Trojans on Sunday afternoon. The Blue Raiders (7-5-2, 4-1-0) were looking to rebound off a disappointing 2-1 setback to the Arkansas State on Friday evening. The loss broke the team's four-match unbeaten run to start Sun Belt Conference play. Shan Jones scored her ninth goal of the season to tie the game at a goal apiece before Michele Clarke won the game for the Red Wolves in the 64th minute



with a header from close range. The Trojans (6-8-1, 2-4-0) fell 2-0 at home to the Western Kentucky on Friday night. Middle Tennessee's main focus coming into the match was forward Grace Rich who led UALR with nine goals and four assists in 13 matches. The Blue Raiders had the first opportunity to take the lead in the 12th minute when Fran Howells dribbled past into the opposing half and played a nice ball over the top of the defense to Shan Jones. The freshman dribbled around Trojan goalkeeper Jane Picarelli but her cross across the face of goal was cleared out of the area. Rich almost put the Trojans out front in the 23rd minute but her shot to the near post from 15 yards was fired straight into the arms of Blue Raider goalkeeper Kela Casiple. The first half ended at a stalemate with both squads unable to break down the opposing defense. The two teams combined for eight shots, including five shots on goal in the opening 45 minutes. The Blue Raiders drew a great chance to go in front in the 65th minute when Jen Threlkeld showed great individual skill by dribbling around several players before being hauled down 30 yards out. The resulting Jaimee Cooper free kick was well-struck but fell into the arms of Picarelli. Threlkeld put the opposition's defense under constant pressure and led the away side with three shots, including two on goal. Rich again provided a dangerous scare for the Blue Raiders towards the end of regulation when she was put through by UALR midfielder Danielle Dunsworth but she had strayed just offside. The match

looked set to go into overtime with both teams still unable to break the deadlock but Middle Tennessee used a set piece in the 74th minute to take a one-goal advantage. Vanessa Mueggler nailed an in-swinging corner kick into the heart of the area that was finished by Threlkeld from five yards. "It was good to see the team rebound from a disappointing loss to Arkansas State on Friday," Head Coach Aston Rhoden said. "We played a strong team in UALR and it is great for our players to earn a victory against a strong opponent." The Blue Raiders return to action with a match against the Louisiana-Monroe Warhawks at Blue Raiders Field on Friday. Kickoff is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Live video and statistics will be available by selecting the appropriate links on GoBlueRaiders.com.

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