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Mueggler nets game winner in overtime

Junior nets OT winner for second time this season

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - It took nearly three extra minutes, but the Middle Tennessee soccer team pulled out its second overtime win of the season with a 1-0 triumph Sunday afternoon against Florida Atlantic in Sun Belt action at Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

"Florida Atlantic certainly posed some challenges for us," head coach Aston Rhoden said. "We were able to create a lot of opportunities on goal but were unable to put most of them away. The great thing is we created one in overtime and it was a great finish to end the game."

Junior [Vanessa Mueggler](#), a 2008 All-Sun Belt Second Team selection, tallied her second game winner for the Blue Raiders in extra time this season when she took a pass from senior [Jen Threlkeld](#) near the top of the 18-yard box. Mueggler then turned and rifled her attempt home past Owl goalie Ashley Lantes at 92:52 to extend the best start in school history for Middle Tennessee (8-1-1, 2-0 Sun Belt).

Mueggler, who placed three of her four shots on goal, also netted the overtime game-winning goal in a 2-1 victory at Wright State August 28 from approximately the same spot.

"It is about being calm out there," Mueggler said. "I had some other opportunities where I did not score. This one just happened to be in overtime."

The Blue Raiders had several chances in the first half to go-ahead, but the Florida Atlantic (2-7-2, 0-2 Sun Belt) defense held firm. Sophomore [Shan Jones](#) sent a through ball to redshirt freshman [Regina Thomas](#) with 11 minutes remaining in the period. Thomas' shot slowly rolled towards the goal line, but an Owl defender knocked it away at the very last second to preserve the tie.

Jones had a chance herself on a one-on-one with a FAU defender, but she was tackled and play continued with no foul being called.

In the second half, Jones nearly added a mark on the scoreboard with just over a minute remaining, but her attempt landed in the hands of Lantes. Freshman [Whitney Jorgenson](#) also had an opportunity, as her cross from the right side barely missed Threlkeld and fellow freshman [Paige Goeglein](#), who both were standing inside the 18-yard box.

Ashley Mannarino led the Owl offense, creating numerous scoring chances and finishing with a game-high six shots. She also took nine of the team's 10 corner kicks in hopes of finding one of her teammates, but the Blue Raider defense stood tall.

Sophomore [Rebecca Cushing](#) recorded her second-straight solo shutout, and third of the season, by playing the entire 92:52 and finishing with two saves.

"I thought our defense played really well," Cushing said. "I thought we did a good job shutting Mannarino down for the most part. It is a good team win."

Middle Tennessee extends its school-record best start to 8-1-1, one-half game better than the 8-2 opening by the 2006 squad. The Blue Raiders have won five in a row and are unbeaten in their last six matches.

MT will travel to Alabama next weekend to face a pair of Sun Belt opponents, beginning at 3 p.m. Friday against Troy in Troy, Ala. The Blue Raiders will then battle South Alabama in Mobile, Ala., at 1 p.m. Sunday.



Vanessa Mueggler tallied her fifth goal of the season as MT defeated FAU Sunday, 1-0, in overtime. (Bradley Lambert)