Blue Raiders battle league leader to scoreless tie

Middle Tennessee to close home slate Sunday against Denver

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee controlled much of the first half possession but could not find the back of the net, while North Texas switched roles in the second stanza and was unable to score either, as the two teams battled to a 0-0 double-overtime tie Friday night in Sun Belt soccer action at Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

"We played a very good North Texas team," head coach Aston Rhoden said. "I think we played a very solid first half and had our opportunities. They played a very good second half and had their opportunities. We have to regroup and be sure to put two solid halves together Sunday."

The Blue Raiders held a 4-1 shot edge through the opening 45 minutes before the Mean Green seized better possession in the second half and overtime periods to end the game with a 17-8 shot advantage.

The best chance for Middle Tennessee (12-3-2, 6-2-1 Sun Belt) came during the first period when freshman Whitney Jorgenson sent a cross from the left side into the box. The ball deflected off the back heal of an NT defender, only to be saved by goalie Mandy Hall preventing the own goal with 27

minutes left in the half.

North Texas (11-4-2, 7-0-2 Sun Belt), the league leader coming into the contest, had its best chance late in regulation with 5:30 remaining. Kelli Lunsford sent a corner kick to the box, which found the head of Kelsey Perlman. Perlman redirected her header high up the far right post, but Blue Raider defender Elisabeth Sikes was on the goal line and was able to clear the attempt away and keep the game scoreless.

Both teams displayed solid defensive efforts and both goalkeepers kept their respective teams in the match. Hall finished with six saves for the Mean Green, while Rebecca Cushing posted seven in between the pipes for MT.

Prior to the game, Middle Tennessee recognized the on and off the field achievements of the last four years of seniors Sarah Beth Lee, Erynn Murray and Jen Threlkeld as part of Senior Night festivities.

The Blue Raiders will return to action as they close the 2009 home slate with a 1 p.m. Sunday contest against Denver.

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