Middle Tennessee falls in home finale to Denver

Thomas nets lone Blue Raider goal

October 25, 2009 · Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - A goal in each half by visiting Denver offset just one by Middle Tennessee as the Blue Raiders fell 2-1 Sunday afternoon in Sun Belt soccer action at Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium in Murfreesboro, Tenn. It marked the final home game for Middle Tennessee this fall.

"First of all, I want to thank our fans for their tremendous support throughout the entire season," head coach Aston Rhoden said. "They truly were a 12th player for us in many games and we cannot thank them enough.

"Today, however, was a tough loss. We started slow before finding our rhythm. Unfortunately, a pour defensive mistake cost us the game. We now have to regroup and get ready for the regular-season finale on the road against a very confident team."

Denver (13-5-1, 8-2 Sun Belt) struck first at 16:51 as Mariah Johnston sent a cross from the right side towards the cage. Teammate Kelli Breidenbach was standing at the top of the six-yard box and her header on the cross sent the ball back across the goal mouth to just inside the far post.

The Blue Raiders nearly tied the game during the opening 45 minutes. Junior Vanessa Mueggler sent a cross of her own into the six-yard box area. Sophomore Shan Jones was able to get her back heal on the pass, but her attempt ricocheted off the crossbar and keeping the Pioneers ahead by a

goal as the teams entered halftime.

Nearly 15 minutes into the second half, Middle Tennessee (12-4-2, 6-3-1 Sun Belt) was able to find the equalizer as sophomore Laura Lamberth sent a long through ball into the penalty box. The ball found the feet of redshirt freshman Regina Thomas, who one-touched the pass behind Denver goalie Lara Campbell at 59:48 to knot the scoring at 1-1.

The Pioneers had a chance with 12 minutes remaining in regulation to claim a one-goal edge, but their shot towards an open net was cleared off the end line by freshman defender Allison Stallard, preserving the tied score.

Denver kept pushing and just two minutes later, at 79:43, Kaitlin Bast fed Johnston at the top of the six-yard box for the go-ahead score and eventual game winner.

The Blue Raiders had several other chances to score throughout the game, including three opportunities by sophomore Luisa Moscoso during the early minutes of the second half, but the Pioneer defense kept the ball out of the net.

Middle Tennessee will close the regular season at 6 p.m. Friday when it travels to Bowling Green, Ky., to face rival Western Kentucky.

Printed on May 23, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/41868