Middle Tennessee plays to 1-1 draw at Troy

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TROY, Ala. - Middle Tennessee's three-game road swing to start Sun Belt Conference play did not prove to be a kind one as the Blue Raiders return home next weekend still searching for their first league win after playing to a 1-1 draw at Troy Sunday. The Blue Raiders (6-4-2, 0-1-2) played to a pair of draws on the trip and suffered one setback, but Sunday's tie at Troy (4-6-1, 2-3-1) has to be the most disappointing of the three near wins that got away. Just as in two previous Sun Belt matches, Middle Tennessee owned the lead in the second half only to give it up, but the Trojans snatched victory in the waning minutes of regulation in the most painful manner. The Blue Raiders were just minutes from their first SBC triumph when Lynn Rankin scored on a pass off a free kick in the 88th minute to even the score 1-1 and force overtime. "Once again we just couldn't finish," Middle Tennessee coach Aston Rhoden said. "We had plenty of opportunities and we just couldn't capitalize. Their keeper (Laura Longard) made some good saves, but even some shots we had, we just knocked them right into her hands. We had breakaways and couldn't finish. It was just very disappointing." The game was scoreless at the half and Middle Tennessee finally broke through in the 60th minute when Rachel Holmes scored off an assist from Caitlin Reeves to take the lead. Middle Tennessee dominated the game everywhere except the scoreboard, collecting 33 shots. Of those 33, 23 were on goal, including 17 in the second half alone. On the other hand, Middle Tennessee allowed only 10 shots in the match, including two on goal; however one of those found the back of the net. The Blue Raiders open the home portion of the Sun Belt slate when they play host to Florida International Friday at 3:30 p.m.

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