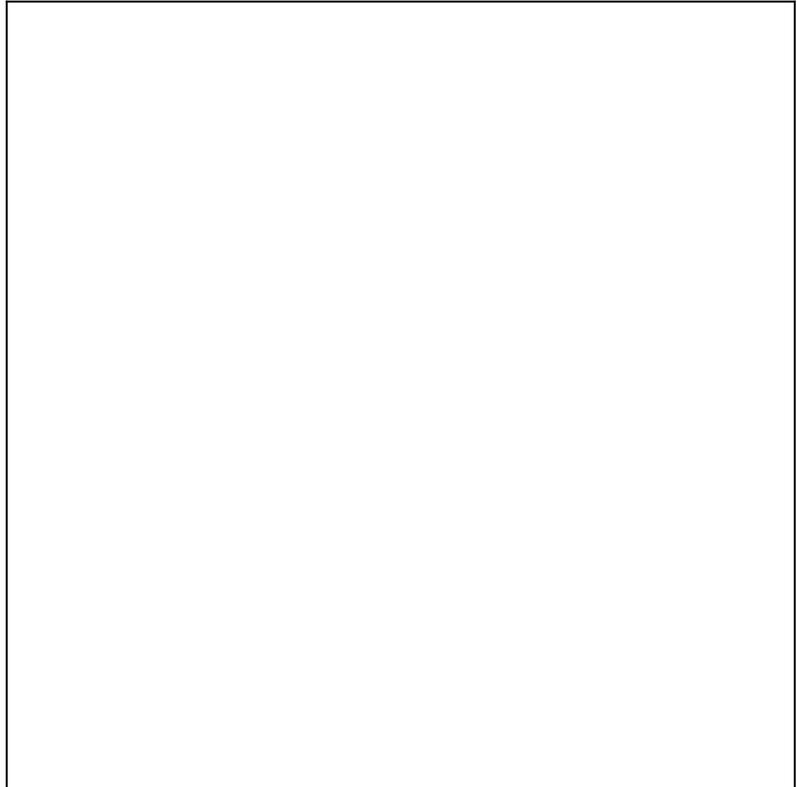


Morgan delivers in 1-0 double-overtime win against Troy

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MOBILE, Ala. - Survive and advance is the theme of each team in postseason and that's what second-seeded Middle Tennessee was able to do in a thrilling 1-0 double-overtime win against seventh-seeded Troy in the quarterfinals of the Sun Belt Championships here Wednesday.

Sophomore forward Kala Morgan provided the game-winner off a header from Kaley Forrest in the 109th minute to send Middle Tennessee (13-4-2) into the semifinals for the third straight year. The Blue Raiders will face third-seeded South Alabama Thursday at 7 p.m., seeking their first appearance in the finals of the SBC Championships.



Middle Tennessee extended its unbeaten streak to eight and avoided a penalty kick shootout in the waning moments of the second sudden-death overtime when Morgan collected her seventh goal of the season with 1:45 remaining in the second extra period.

"The ball was crossed and Kaley headed it over. I was just in the right place at the right time," Morgan said. "Troy played great but we were able to find a way to win. We are doing well as a team and we just want to keep it going."

The Blue Raiders, who tied the school record for single-season wins with 13, dominated the match statistically, collecting 22 shots, including six in the two overtimes, while limiting the Trojans (4-10-1) to just 10; however, Trojan keeper Laura Longard was up to the challenge with nine saves, including numerous game-saving stops under a heavy Middle Tennessee attack in front of her goal.

With time running out in the second overtime, Middle Tennessee received its 12th and most important corner kick of the game. Junior standout Rebecca Rodriguez took the corner and delivered a perfect kick to Forrest, who crossed it to Morgan for the winner.

"We worked hard to get that corner and (Rodriguez) put up a perfect-placed ball. It was now or never," said Forrest, who dished out her third assist of the season. "I just went up and tried to put it in the direction of the goal. We had a lot of people crashing the goal so we were bound to get something. Kala did a great job following and making sure it was in the back of the net.

"I think this is the kind of games we all live for, money games, where you either do it or you go home. We didn't want this to be our seniors last game but it was more dramatic than we would have liked."

Middle Tennessee's defense was again superlative as it collected its seventh shutout. Senior keeper Danielle Perreault has been in goal for each shutout and she was once again strong Wednesday with five saves, including a game-saving grab in the 73rd minute of a scoreless contest.

"Our defense was solid and Danielle was terrific in goal," Middle Tennessee coach Aston Rhoden said. "At the end of the day we just wanted to win. It was a tough one for us. Troy played great and they had a terrific defensive plan, much like they did during the regular season (in a 1-1 tie). If there was any time to solve the problems they presented us it was today and it was good to get it done."

The Sun Belt Championships are available live on the Sun Belt website, www.sunbeltsports.org. The championships may be viewed live via web streaming at a cost of \$9.95.

NOTES: Middle Tennessee tied the school record for wins in a single season with 13 ... Forrest's assist was the 37th of the season, which is second on the single-season list ... Middle Tennessee collected its seventh shutout of the season, also second on the single-season list. The record for most shutouts in a season is nine, set in 2003 ... With five saves against Troy, senior keeper Danielle Perreault has 167 for her career, moving into second on the all-time list ... Perreault collected her 23rd win in goal, also good for second on the career list at Middle Tennessee ... The Blue Raiders are in the semifinals of the SBC Championships for the third straight season under fourth-year head coach Aston Rhoden.

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