Mueggler strikes again in overtime in Blue Raider win

Fourth career game winner in extra time

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee senior Vanessa Mueggler netted her fourth career overtime game winner, and second of the season, as the Blue Raiders garnered a 1-0 victory over Troy Sunday afternoon to maintain second place in the Sun Belt standings. The Blue Raiders can finish no lower than the No. 3 seed in the upcoming league tournament and own a one-half game edge for the No. 2 spot over North Texas heading into Friday's regular-season finale.

In a game in which Middle Tennessee (11-8, 8-2 Sun Belt) dominated from the opening kick, it took the 12th goal of the season by the midfielder who ranks second in the conference in scoring. With the Blue Raiders pushing forward, a loose ball from the Trojan defense found Mueggler standing all alone outside the penalty box. The Pincourt, Quebec, native then buried her fourth attempt of the match from 25 yards out just under the crossbar at 98:31 to seal Middle Tennessee's fifth straight win and eighth in its last nine games.

The Blue Raiders controlled much of the action on both sides of the field, despite heavy winds playing a factor for both teams. Middle Tennessee finished with a 20-to-3 shot advantage, including a 10-to-2 edge when having to face the high winds in the second half.

Redshirt sophomore Regina Thomas nearly ended the game in the Blue Raiders' favor in the 59th minute, but her pair of shots from inside the six-yard box first hit the post then was knocked away by a Troy (10-7-1, 5-5 Sun Belt) defender off the goal line.

Junior Hope Suominen also had a chance at a first half tally, but her shot from 35 yards away ricocheted off the crossbar after being carried by the winds.

Junior goalkeeper Rebecca Cushing stopped all three Trojan attempts, the best coming early in the second half on a Ceil Marinec free kick. The shutout is her third consecutive, all in league action, and fifth overall on the campaign.

She has combined with the Middle Tennessee defense to not allow more than a goal by the opposition in 11 consecutive matches, including all 10 of the Sun Belt schedule.

Thomas and Mueggler each registered four shots to pace the Blue Raider offense, while Mary Morris and Nikki Stamaris were credited with the other two Troy attempts.

Middle Tennessee will close the regular season when it plays host to Western Kentucky at 7 p.m. Friday at Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium. Prior to the game, the Blue Raiders will honor the on and off the field accomplishments of the five seniors on this year's team, including Jaimee Cooper, Emily Harris, Fran Howells, Mueggler and Emily Snowdon.

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