# Raiders draw with WKU, claim share of SBC title

## MT claims No. 2 seed for Sun Belt Tournament

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**MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -** Middle Tennessee pelted their arch rival WKU with 19 shots, but the two squads played to a 1-1 draw in front of 765 fans at Dean A. Hayes Track & Soccer Stadium Friday evening.

Friday's result gave MT (13-4-1, 8-1-1 Sun Belt) a share of the regular season title - the second in school history. In 2004, the Blue Raiders claimed a share with North Texas. MT is the No. 2 seed in the SBC Tournament and will play host No. 7 South Alabama at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 31.

North Texas claimed the top seed due to a 3-2 win over MT, while FIU fell to third due to a loss against the Raiders on Sept. 28. The official tournament bracket can be found by clicking here.

Despite having three early opportunities, MT could not find the net in the first half. MT led the shot column, 6-to-5, but the Lady Toppers (11-4-3, 6-4-1) capitalized first. In total, the Raiders outshot WKU, 19-13.

Midfielder Sydney Sisler scored the Lady Topper's first goal at the 17th minute from 25 yards out as the ball sailed high in the net. The WKU defense limited MT to one shot on goal in the first half.

MT's offensive schemes opened up in the second half with a blitz on the freshman goalkeeper Nikki Hall. The aggressive played worked out when Charity Blair found the equalizer 20 yards out at the 54th minute. The goal was the third for Blair this season.

The two teams battled to the first period overtime. WKU managed three shots on two corner kicks in the first extra period, but outstanding play by the senior Jessica Gilchrist limited the Tops. MT had two goal opportunities that were near misses as the Raiders played to their first draw this season.

"I saw a lot of fight, grit, determination and character," said head coach Aston Rhoden. "For us to come back from a goal down and take over the game, that's credit to the team and the leadership we have."

Gilchrist, a redshirt senior, finished the night with five saves, allowing one goal in 110 minutes. WKU's Hall wrapped up the match with seven saves and one goal allowed.

After the match, Middle Tennessee honored its six seniors (Blair, Gilchrist, Paige Goeglein, Whitney Jorgenson, Allison Stallard and Regina Thomas) for their outstanding accomplishments. The group logged 29,000 minutes, while collecting 48 victories during their four-year tenure.

"We wanted to be outright champions," said Rhoden. "One of our goals was to stay undefeated at home in conference play. We accomplished that. We wanted to win the regular season. Yes, we had to share it, but we accomplished that. Our next thing is to play in the NCAA Tournament. That's our next step."

MT plays South Alabama in the quarterfinals of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament next Wednesday, Oct. 31 in Mobile, Ala. Kickoff is slated for 7 p.m.

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