

Cardinals and Huskies play to draw

By: Brian Weiss

MUNCIE, Ind. – The Ball State women’s soccer team played to a 2-2 draw against Northern Illinois on Sunday in Mid-American Conference play.

Nicole Pembleton and Elaina Musleh both scored for the Cardinals, but it wasn’t enough as Jess Woolridge scored two goals for the Huskies to earn them a draw on Ball State’s Senior Day.

Neither team was able to find a game-winner after Musleh notched the equalizer at the 80:40 mark. Ball State had a golden opportunity for a winner in the first overtime but Victoria Jacobs was unable to produce from the penalty spot.

“Very disappointed with the result, second time this weekend that we did not convert a PK, thoroughly disappointed with that,” Ball State coach Craig Roberts said. “That’s an absolute definite that we have to convert and claim the points when we’ve got that.”

The Cardinals had plenty of opportunities to score as they dominated the Huskies in shots attempted (27-11) and shots on goal (13-6).

“If were creating that many chances and not converting then you don’t deserve to win at the end of the day,” Roberts said.

“There’s no reason we can’t do it, we create great chances, we just got to put them away,” senior midfielder Maimee Morris said.

After a scoreless first half, Pembleton got the scoring started in the 52nd minute when she collected a ball in the box and snuck it past Huskies goalkeeper Amy Carr into the right side of the net.

“I think I had extra motivation to put the ball in the net and I did,” Pembleton said.

It was Pembleton’s 3rd goal of the season. She led the Cardinals in scoring last season with four goals.

The Huskies fired back in the 71st minute as Jess Woolridge took full advantage of a poor clearance from senior keeper Layne Schramm and slotted the ball into the open net to equalize.

Woolridge then scored her 2nd goal of the day in the 81st minute. After the Cardinals committed a foul from about 35 yards out, Courtney Ksiazek placed the resulting free kick perfectly into the box and Woolridge headed cleanly into the back of the net to give the Huskies the lead.

The Cardinals struck back 25 seconds later as Musleh headed a ball from Morris right past a stunned Carr. Musleh’s goal would be the last of the game.

Carr was a big reason why the Huskies were able to keep the Cardinals from scoring more than they did. She recorded 11 saves in the game but played a bigger role than the box score illustrates. A key save on the Jacobs PK and a diving stop in the final seconds kept the score deadlocked at two.

Both teams played aggressively during the match and that resulted in a combined 33 fouls.

“I think it affected the flow of the game. It wasn’t a game that was running easy; it was a game that was consistently infringed upon,” Roberts said about the constant stoppage of play due to fouls.

Both coaches were frustrated with the officiating throughout the match and it boiled over for Northern Illinois as assistant coach Connor McKee was sent off in the 93rd minute and head coach John Ross was shown a yellow card after arguing with head official Miguel Panduro Jr.

With the draw, Ball State’s record is now 9-4-3 (4-2-2 MAC) while Northern Illinois sits at 4-9-3 (2-4-2 MAC). Three regular season matches remain and four points separate the top six teams in the conference. The Cardinals still have a chance to host a first-round game in the conference tournament as they have 14 points in the league standings.