

# **THE NEW JERSEY SOCCER GROUP**

## **Press Release**



Millburn NJ, June 20<sup>th</sup> 2008

### **Slow Start again costly for Magic**

In an all Jersey affair, the Millburn Magic looked to take a step closer to the playoffs tonight as they hosted the Atlantic City Diablos. Unfortunately for the Magic, a lack of concentration in the beginning cost them yet again; the Diablos scoring an early goal and forcing Millburn to chase the game, the Magic eventually going down 1-0.

After a slow start from both teams, the game sparked to life in the sixth minute after a needless foul allowed Courtney Roarty to deliver the first of many dangerous balls into the box from the left. The Diablos winning the ball in the air were able to flick the ball into the path of Kristen Edmonds who easily slotted past Lia Fierro from eight yards. The Magic failed to react and could have easily been 2-0 down minutes later after a failed clearance from Kaitlin Blaine led to Danielle Wessler being clean through on goal; only for her to miss-connect with the ball lending an easy save to Fierro.

The Magic finally began to get into the game after fifteen minutes. Right midfielder Rachel Fell delivered excellent crosses from the flank, whilst quick footwork from Elin Olsson led to a near post chance for Steph Sabaliauskas, which forced a smart save from the Diablos GK Sarah Keane. Every time the Magic went on the offensive, Sabaliauskas, Fell and Olsson were involved, making some good runs and passes, but lacking the final finish, Fell with the best effort with a good strike from Kat McKenna's free kick, whistling past the post. The Magic carried on through the half dominating possession but failing to really stretch the Diablos. Meanwhile, the Diablos enjoyed the clearest chances, the pick of which coming right before half time. Edmonds did well to beat her mark down the left before pulling the ball back to the unmarked Wessler. Wessler, with time to pick her spot wasted the opportunity by firing high and wide.

The second half began in much the same fashion with temperatures beginning to rise as the Magic chased a goal and the savior of their playoff bid. Possession swapped hands quickly, leading to chances at both ends. Firstly good work from Jen Vroman led to Kim Malecki shooting just wide with a swerving strike minutes before the Magic's replacement GK Sammi Hirsch was called into action with a fantastic double save. As in the first half, an unmarked Wessler failed to connect properly from inside the box before the rebounding strike was steered away from goal by a combination Hirsch and a defender. Hirsch was again called into action midway through the half, this time with a great save from a header after Roarty deliver another testing freekick into the area. As the Magic continued to press for an equalizer, it was Kat McKenna that had the best chances to be a hero. Firstly, a terrific free kick crashed onto the cross bar, before Vroman and Sabaliauskas worked the ball well across the field, into McKenna's path, only for the woodwork to deny her yet again. In her most clear cut effort, McKenna shot just inches wide of the far post with just minutes to go as the Magic began to run out of time.

The defeat is a huge setback for the Magic's bid to reach the playoffs, whilst the Diablos are assured their place as they move to 5-1-1. The Magic's next home game is this coming Wednesday at Millburn High School when they will host the Northampton Laurels, kick off at 7pm.

*Magic Line-Up:* Lia Fierro, Donnique Sinclair-Chambers, Katelin Blaine, Ashley Ventura, Chrissie Sidie, Lina Starapoli, Kat McKenna, Rachel Fell, Lara Kaminski, Steph Sabaliauskis, Elin Olsson. *Subs:* Tara Ricciardi (29), Jen Vroman (37), Kim Malecki (23), Sara Grimsgaard (23), Caitlin Fabian (25), Sammi Hirsch (45), Denise Gosling

The Magic represent Northern NJ in the Women's Premier Soccer League, an independent national league representing the highest level of women's soccer in the United States. The Magic are part of The New Jersey Soccer Group, a management company representing a family of soccer based organizations offering a full range of soccer services in northern New Jersey.

More about the Millburn Magic at  
More about the New Jersey Soccer Group at  
More about the WPSL at

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