

WOMENS SOCCER

TAMPA FALLS SHORT AGAINST EMBRY-RIDDLE



Welcome To The Show

The Tampa Spartans Women's soccer team had been doing alright with their first game of the season being a 4-0 win against St. Edwards and a tie before last night's game against Barry being 0-0. Before the game even commenced, I had a unique opportunity to dive into the careful preparation process of the Spartans. Sof Libman (2), a junior and a key defensive player for the Spartans, shared an exclusive insight into their distinctive game-day routine. Libman explained, "On the day of the game, we will never do a full practice, but we will do a jog to get our legs moving, stretch together as a team, and then engage in a film and scout session where we learn about how we should play against every specific team and individual player opponents. It mentally prepares the team with knowledge of the opposing team's style of play and everyone's individual role." Having this type of bonding time and preparation as a team allows for the Spartans to come in strong and ready for any game. Making sure that everyone is stretched and warmed up also allows for less injuries and any sort of cramping. Before the games they also tend to cheer and hydrate due to the heat intensity.

FIRST HALF: The opening 45 minutes of the match were characterized by relentless offensive pressure from the Tampa Spartans. The dynamic duo of Tali O'Leary (26), forward, and Sydni Dennis (10), also a forward, exhibited incredible chemistry upfront, generating numerous shot attempts on goal. Despite their efforts, a missed save by Tampa's goalkeeper led to Embry-Riddle taking the lead. However, the Spartans wasted no time in responding. Brooke Steigerwalt (15), forward, scored a remarkable unassisted goal just moments later, marking her second consecutive match with a goal. The electrifying atmosphere in the stadium was further intensified when Grace Fowler (3), midfielder, of the Spartans secured her first goal of the season. Fowler, overcome with emotions, expressed, "It felt amazing, like it didn't even feel real. A huge rush of emotions." Fowler's goal was a testament to her relentless pursuit of the ball and her invaluable contributions to the team's performance. Hopefully this won't be her only game in the season. Her teammates ran right over to her to cheer her on and support her goal. She had expressed how happy she was on the field by her celebration and facial expressions.

However, the celebration was short-lived. As the second half commenced, the Eagles regained control. Aidan Smith (1), the Spartans' goalkeeper who had played the full 90 minutes of the game, displayed remarkable prowess with six incredible saves. Nevertheless, the relentless pressure eventually took its toll, with three goals slipping past her. Smith's performance set a personal record, showcasing her resilience under intense circumstances. To shore up their defense and reduce the number of shots on goal, the Spartans will need to improve their communication and strategy in future matches.



SECOND HALF: On the opposing side, Embry-Riddle's goalkeeper, Oona Jokinin (1), played the entire 90-minute game with Savanna Sheahan (13) also maintaining a constant presence on the field, bolstering the Eagles' defense. It was evident that the Eagles' coaching staff had a well-thought-out strategy to keep the Spartans at bay. Sure enough, the second half kicked Tampa around.

While the game was exhilarating on the field, there were passionate discussions among fans in the stands. Many voiced their frustrations over the coach's decisions, with parents advocating for their daughters to be given more playing time and friends shouting their support from the bleachers. One attendee, Ari Poletta, a Junior at the University of Tampa, expressed her desire to see her roommate, Sof Libman, on the field for a more extended duration, believing that Sof's skills could have made a difference in preventing some of the goals.

POST-MATCH ANALYSIS: The final score, 3-2 in favor of the Eagles, did not reflect the Spartans' relentless effort and determination throughout the match. The team has been unwavering in its commitment to improving their skills and teamwork both on and off the field. To increase their scoring opportunities, the Spartans must work on generating more shots on goal, as demonstrated by the statistics: Embry-Riddle took 16 shots with 10 on target, while the Spartans recorded 5 attempts with 4 on target.

Despite the tough loss, The University of Tampa Spartans displayed remarkable resilience and promise. Fans can look forward to more captivating games in the upcoming fixtures. I hope to get an interview with the Coach after the next game to find out how she thinks during the games. The women's team at the moment is 4 and 3 with 2 games that ended in a tie. Hopefully the coach will come to her senses and see that it would possibly help more to put in new players that could potentially work better together. To stay updated on the women's soccer team's schedule, visit the Tampa Spartans' official website. In conclusion, the thrilling soccer showdown between the Tampa Spartans and the Embry-Riddle Eagles will be remembered as a showcase of incredible talent, determination, and the enduring spirit of competition. Both teams left their hearts on the field, and while the result may not have favored the Spartans, their dedication and promise shine brightly for the future. This match served as a testament to the Spartans' unwavering commitment and excellence in women's soccer.

Looking ahead, the Spartans will undoubtedly learn from this experience and use it to fuel their determination for the upcoming fixtures. Each game is a chance for growth and improvement, and the team remains focused on their ultimate goals. As their journey continues, fans will eagerly anticipate the next upcoming game and exciting rest of the season for the Spartans. The Spartans story is far from over, and their quest for success continues to captivate and inspire. The dedication of the players, and the passion of the fans through competitive spirit all point to a future with remarkable achievements and memorable memories on the soccer field at Pepin Stadium. Go Spartans!