

Sep. 28 Girls Soccer



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Kristina Ragolia, who drew praise from Hamilton coach Anthony Tessein for her play today, dribbles ahead of Hamilton's Angelina Cifelli (Photo by John Blaine/purchase photos by e-mailing jbsportphoto@aol.com).

Despite heart-breaking loss, Diamond pleased with Nottingham's effort

By Rich Fisher

Fish4Scores.com

Sep. 28: A coach always looks at things a little differently than the casual observer.

To the person on the outside looking in, today appeared to be a devastating loss for the Nottingham girls' soccer team as it blew a two-goal lead to an arch rival.

But to the coach who prepared the Northstars, the only bummer was the result itself.

"I think we played well, I was happy with what they did," said Elyse Diamond after her team fell to 0-7 with a 3-2 loss at Hamilton. "We practiced and we implemented what we practiced yesterday.

"I was very proud that what we practiced we actually applied today. I can't complain. They did well."

In other words, more efforts like this will get the Northstars into the win column.

Nottingham was outstanding early in the game, peppering Erin Septer with numerous shots and finally taking the lead when Kristina Ragolia buried a nice free kick over the wall into the back of the net.

The Northstars continued to attack and Septer kept it 1-0 until halftime. But with less than two minutes gone in the second half, Dana Davies won a ball on the left flank, dribbled down the sideline and drilled one into the short side to make it 2-0.

Hamilton bounced back, however, behind Sam Barlow's corner kick barrage.

"We gave up way too many (seven) corners," Diamond said. "We can't give up that many. That's the next thing we need to work on."

After Hamilton took the lead, Nottingham still managed to apply some late pressure but could not get the equalizer.

"We ran out of time," Diamond said. "The momentum started to swing back again. We had it the first half, they had it a good portion of the second half and it started to swing our way, we just ran out of time."

It turned into another close loss for the Northstars, who are better than their record.

"For a team that hasn't won yet, they're a heck of a squad," Hamilton coach Anthony Tessein said. "They had us scared. The rivalry helps but they play good soccer. "We didn't have an answer for Ragolia up top. I'm really surprised she didn't hurt us more than she did."

But if Nottingham keeps making its coach happy, it will start hurting teams soon enough.