

MILLBURN MAGIC



Press Release

Millburn NJ, May 31st 2008

Magic Spilt Points in Thriller

The Magic returned to Keith A Niegel Stadium last night to host the Philadelphia Liberty. In a physical battle, the Magic twice came from behind to tie the game 2-2. After opening kick off, the Magic failed to match the Liberty's bright start for which they paid the price for after seven minutes. An overly ambitious attempt to tackle from the Magic's captain Sinclair-Chambers gave the Liberty a penalty kick and the perfect chance to take the lead. Assuming responsibility, Jill Hutchinson stepped up and, despite Magic keeper Lia Fierro diving the right way, powered the ball home for her second goal of the campaign. The decision from Magic Head Coach Andy Sones to switch formations shortly after the goal allowed the Magic to get into their stride and they began to take over the game. With Sara Grimsgaard anchoring a five player midfield alongside Lara Kaminski and Tara Riccardi pushing forward, the Magic began to win the battle for possession in the center of the field whilst Rachel Fell and Christine Sidie looked promising when on the ball in wide areas.

The Magic's developing rhythm was interrupted due to inclement weather conditions leading to a delay in the game. As the skies brightened for the restart, the atmosphere on the field remained dark and tense as both teams stepped up their physical game in a fiercely contested battle in which a number of players were lucky to escape caution from the referee. The Magic continued to push forward, looking the mostly likely to score throughout the half. Right winger Rachel Fell, with her speed and agility was a key component to Magic's play as she consistently beat her opponent to deliver excellent balls into the box. Her tireless work paid off on fifty-seven minutes as she again crossed the ball from wide to Tara Riccardi, running through from midfield to strike the ball home. Riccardi's goal, the first the Liberty have conceded in the league this season, energized the home team as the Magic quickly looked to capitalize again. Unfortunately for the Magic, this was Fell's last action of the game as injury forced her to give way to Steph Zaleski. The loss of Fell halted the Magic's rhythm in the game temporality until the introduction of Swedish star Elin Olsson. Olsson looked lively and creative, running at defenders with great speed and causing problems with her movement off the ball.

As the Magic continued to focus on offense, they were caught off guard on sixty-five minutes. Whitney Weiraub, a threat all evening to the Magic, broke away down the left before passing the ball into Hutchinson who's quick feet allowed her to pass defender Katelin Blaine before striking past Fierro. The goal, against the run of play, inspired the Magic who increased their efforts to pressure the Liberty defense; Christine Sidie, Kim Maleki and Steph Sabaliauskas all coming close to equalizing. The Magic continue to press right until the end and were rewarded for their efforts in the final minute. Jen Vroman, playing wide on the left delivered the ball into the middle, where Sabaliauskas did well to flick the ball into the path of Sidie who remained calm under pressure to slide the ball past the Keeper Katie Frey. Despite coming late, the goal was nothing less than the Magic deserved having dominated possession for large parts of the second half. In a hard fought battle, the Magic deserved to take maximum points, but will be relieved to have rescued a late goal to prevent dropping all points. The Magic's next home game will be on June 20th when they will face tough competition from the Atlantic City Diablos.

Magic Line-Up: Lia Fierro, Tara Riccardi, Donnique Sinclair-Chambers, Katelin Blaine, Kat McKenna, Rachel Fell, Chrissie Sidie, Lara Kaminski, Jen Vroman, Kim Malecki. Caitlin Fabian. **Subs:** Sara Grimsgaard, Steph Sabaliauskis, Elin Olsson, Sam Weiner, Denise Gosling, Jenifer Albuja, Suzie Baldissard.

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
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