

MISSOURI STATE

Kansas City rallies to upset Missouri State in NCAA Tournament second round

Bears finish the season with only three losses – but two to the Roos



by Mary Ellen Chiles
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UMKC senior goalie Brandon McGaugh made six saves on Sunday. (Photo by Mary Ellen Chiles).

Back in 2001, the Kansas City Roos men's soccer team won a game in the NCAA Tournament. It took 23 years to win another.

Now they've won two in the past four days, beating No. 15 Missouri State 2-1 at Betty & Bobby Allison South Stadium on Sunday.

The Bears earned a first-round bye for the second time in school history, while the Roos blanked Saint Louis 3-0 on Nov. 21.

One more chance



Missouri State's Victor Wachowicz (2) celebrates with Harry Jolley (21) after Jolley scored against Kansas City Nov. 24. The goal, assisted by Wachowicz, gave the Bears a 1-0 lead, but Kansas City scored twice in the second half to win the NCAA Tournament second-round game 2-1. (Photo by Mary Ellen Chiles)

MSU took the lead when senior Harry Jolley scored his second goal of the season, tapping in a deflected pass from Victor Wachowicz at 32 minutes. Senior Jesús Barea was also credited with an assist.

But the Roos tied it up just a few minutes into the second half with a goal from junior Sora Shibata at 51 minutes, and they took the lead when sophomore Ales Kohoutek scored at 72 minutes.

Barea appeared to have a chance to tie up the match when he was fouled near the penalty box with about 90 seconds remaining. But the referees checked Video Assisted Review (VAR) and declared him outside of the box, giving the Bears a mere free kick instead.

Roos players cheered from the bench and the pitch, relieved that MVC Player of the Year Barea did not get a penalty kick.

“I have not seen the video, so I can’t comment on it,” Missouri State coach Michael Seabolt said. “Our assistant coaches that had seen the video seemed to think so, but I haven’t seen it.”

A kind of grief



A friend consoles senior forward Jesús Barea after his final game with the Bears, a loss in the second round of the NCAA Tournament against UMKC on Sunday, Nov. 24 at Allison South Stadium. (Photo by Mary Ellen Chiles)

After the loss, many Bears players sat on the bench and the field, staring off into the distance with tears in their eyes.

It’s only a game, but it’s still a loss.

“We all have to grieve the end of the season and then reload for what’s in front of us,” Seabolt said.

He hopes that, in time, the players will appreciate their accomplishments.

“When you have an alumni weekend five years from now, you’re not thinking about (losses),” he said, “You’re thinking about each other and the lifelong relationships that you build.”

Some, like Barea, will play professionally. Others will also decide what’s next, and where. Nearly all of the Bears are international students, which can always add a few pieces of red tape.

“They’ve all got challenges, whether to play soccer still, whether to get a job, whether it’s to get a master’s degree. They’ve all got new challenges,” Seabolt said.

But they’ll have their teammates cheering them on.

“For those that are seniors, we’ll make sure they know that we love them and they’re part of our family for life,” Seabolt said. “And for those that continue on (with MSU), we’ll do the same.”

Leaving the Valley

Seabolt hopes his team can eventually take pride in a season where they won their first-ever Missouri Valley Conference regular season title.

“They work for each other and support each other, and they did win a Valley championship,” Seabolt said. “Let’s not forget that.”

The Bears will move to the American Athletic Conference next year. They finished the season 12-3-2, with two losses against the Roos. Kansas City improved to 13-4-3 with the win. The Roos advance to the third round of the NCAA Tournament and will visit No. 2 Pittsburgh at 4 p.m. on Dec. 1.



Mary Ellen Chiles

Mary Ellen Chiles is a freelance photographer and writer based in the Ozarks. She graduated from Missouri State University with a bachelor’s in creative writing and a master’s in English, Creative Nonfiction Writing.

More by Mary Ellen Chiles



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