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Franklin High defeats Tullahoma in semifinals

By Anthony Coleman / Sports Writer

CHATTANOOGA -- Franklin High assured itself of playing in its second consecutive Class AAA state soccer title game last night when it beat Tullahoma 5-0 in the semifinals of the TSSAA girls state soccer tournament.

The Lady Rebels (18-4) played great soccer on a soggy pitch in a game that was delayed due to a penalty kick shootout in a earlier game between Knoxville Farragut and Germantown. Farragut won 1-0 and will square off against Franklin at 1 tomorrow at Finley Stadium for the state championship.

"Farragut had to play 110 minutes and we had a chance to give a lot our players rest in the second half," Franklin Coach Jimmy Burchett said. "Hopefully that will help us out when we play them."

The first half of the game between Tullahoma and Franklin was a defensive affair for the first 21 minutes of play. Then Brittey Potts hammered in a shot from about 20 yards out into the right corner of the goal, giving the Lady Rebels a 1-0 lead at the 18:21 mark.

Just four minutes later, Katie Jackson fired in a shot from about 15 yards out after Nicole Thompson set her up with a beautiful pass across the middle. After that Franklin continued playing brilliant soccer, keeping the ball on the Tullahoma side of the field for the most part. That pressure finally paid off when Ashley Church, the daughter of Vanderbilt women's soccer coach Robbie Church, slammed in the game-breaker from about 20 yards just 21 seconds before the half.

"I thought for the first 15 minutes we played pretty well but after that we didn't play so well for the rest of that half," said Tullahoma Coach Richard Chadwick, whose team was making its second consecutive appearance in the semifinals of the state

tournament.

Franklin added two more goals in the second half to go on to the easy win.

"(Chadwick) has done a good job with that program," Burchett said. "Last year we didn't play so good in our first game here so we really let them know that we needed to come out here ready to play today. And they did."

Franklin 5, Tullahoma 0

Franklin goals: Brittney Potts 2, Katie Jackson, Ashley Church, Natalie Dunham. **Franklin goalie:** Amanda Martin. **Tullahoma goalie:** Ann Shelton.

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