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## Mexico, Argentina earn tie in Decatur

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For The Times

Mexicans score first but can't hold lead down stretch

Trumpets sounded, airhorns blared, drums pounded, and the crowd cheered, jeered, and chanted at Decatur's Jack Allen Soccer Stadium Thursday night.

And there was a soccer match, too.

Representative women's teams from Mexico and Argentina battled to a 1-all draw in front of a packed crowd in what was essentially a home game for Mexico.

Argentina settled into the game faster than their Central American counterparts, forcing Mexico to keep up with their up-tempo passing game.

But the Mexicans grabbed the first goal in the 22nd minute from what seemed like a harmless cross into the box.

Mexico's Lupita Worbis took the ball down the left flank and sent a cross into Argentinean goalkeeper Vanina Correa, who spilled the ball into the path of Mexican forward Christine Nieva. Nieva buried her shot in the back of the net.

"It was an unfortunate mistake," Argentina coach Carlos Borrello said through an interpreter. "It was wet and the keeper could not hold onto (the ball). It was an unlucky play."

The largely pro-Mexican crowd roared its approval with chants and songs. But the lead lasted only 23 minutes for the Tricolores.

In first half stoppage time, Clarisa Huber crossed to Belen Potassa, who volleyed her shot past the keeper.

"We had a good first half," said Mexican coach Leonardo Cuellar Rivera. "Unfortunately, we took a goal in the last minute of the half. That made Argentina tough in the second half."

Neither team found its rhythm in a tough second half as the night became cooler and the wind picked up. Worbis shot just more than 20 yards in the 56th minute for the Mexicans, while Argentina's Ludmilla Manicler shot straight at the Mexican keeper from the edge of the box in the 82nd minute.

"We had a good first half, and they had a good second half," said Rivera, who also thanked the Valley's Mexican community for showing their support. "I think the tie was a fair result."

The draw clinched a United States-Canada matchup in the title game of the 2007 Futbol Internacional tournament. Mexico faces China and Argentina meets Trinidad and Tobago in consolation games on Saturday in Mobile.

Argentina outshot Mexico 7-5, and took three corner's to Mexico's one.

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