

# Vikings lose title game to Bengals

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Davis County Clipper (published 10/30/2013)

Expectations were very high for the Viewmont girls' soccer team as they took the field at Rio Tinto for the 5A State title game against Brighton last Friday.

However, instead of repeating as state champions, the Lady Vikings fell to the Bengals 1-0 on a second half goal by Sydney Meyers, marking the third time Viewmont has lost in the title game in the last four seasons.

"We understood there were high expectations going into the game," said Vikings' coach Emalee Tate. "Trying to repeat as State champions after winning it last year, then getting the national attention we received from MaxPreps and moving back to Region 1 ... there was a lot of outside attention given to us."

During the season, however, Tate said she gave her team the assignment of concentrating on one opponent after another, and everything else could speak for itself.

"We tried not to focus on it all, and we knew it would be harder to win with the move (to Region 1)," she said. "But we got back (to the title game) and lost a good battle to a fantastic team. (Brighton) deserved to be there and deserved to play in that game."

The match itself had the Bengals controlling the pace of the game through much of the



Viewmont players show their disappointment while watching Brighton celebrate.

first and second halves. Even though the first half ended at 0-0, Vikings' goal keeper Haley Johnson was kept very busy at the net.

"They definitely controlled the pace of the game after about the first 10 minutes," said Tate. "We tried to adjust by moving in and working through the middle of the field, but Brighton's midfielders are very good."

The scoreless tie was broken in the 64th minute; however.

Given a free kick from just outside the box, Meyers took the set piece from the near-side of the field and was able to bend the ball past a Viewmont wall of defenders and over the outstretched arms of Johnson.

A critical play for Viewmont happened two minutes before the tie-breaking score, as Johnson had injured her

shoulder making one of her many diving saves in the game.

"She just dove to her left and injured her shoulder," said Tate. "I asked her if she wanted to stay out or go back in, and knowing that she would give anything to help her team win, she went back in on the next play."

The goal was Meyers' fifth of the season, and second against the Vikings.

"She took the free kick from there because she's left-footed," said Tate about the play. "I know Haley went full extension on the ball, but it was just a well-placed, well-executed free kick."

The Vikings finished the season 15-4 overall, losing all four of their matches to Fremont and Brighton.

Viewmont has reached the 5A state title game in each of the past four seasons, claiming a championship in 2012.