

dribbles before firing a shot towards the post.

Franklin goalkeeper Ruby Swierczuk made an incredible diving stop to knock the ball away, but Alfano was in perfect position to corral the rebound and net the put-back.

"It was really exciting. I was glad we got on the board early. We needed it, it gave us the momentum," Alfano said.

McNary remained incredibly aggressive in the early stages of the first half, attempting six shots-on-goal in the first five minutes of the contest. But missed opportunities and a litany of impressive saves from Swierczuk kept it a one-score game.

"She was a great keeper. Definitely have to give her a ton of credit," Brouse said.

Franklin didn't get their first real opportunity to tie the game until the 30th minute of the contest, but sophomore keeper Hannah Ferguson turned the Lightning away with a key save as the Celtics went to the break with the 1-0 lead.

While McNary was without an everyday keeper last season, Brouse believes that the Celtics have found their goalie in Ferguson, who recorded her second straight shutout.

"I have been super impressed with Hannah. I know she wants some more field time, and that was always the game plan, but she has been crushing it in the goal," Brouse said. "She has really been taking charge, I couldn't be more happy with her performance."

Along with her athleticism and spatial awareness as a keeper, Ferguson prides herself on communicating with her back line and trying to help put defenders in proper position.

"My defenders know that I can see the field and they listen really well. I have years of training so I know how to position myself, but being able to position my team is really helpful," Ferguson said.

"We have definitely improved a lot on

It is a huge win for us. Their confidence is way higher than it was after our first game. This is probably the most coachable team I have ever worked with.

— LAUREN BROUSE
McNary girls soccer coach

defense," Alfano added.

Franklin had one last chance to force a draw with nine minutes remaining in the contest, but Ferguson came away with her 10th save of the game to salvage the victory for McNary.

The Celtics will try and keep their win-streak alive when they host David Douglas on Tuesday Sept. 21 at 7 p.m.

"It's all about staying positive and working on what we need to work on," Ferguson said.



TOP: Tessa Fisher takes a corner kick. BOTTOM: Sydnee Alfano controls possession of the ball.

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

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