As USA Women's 7s coach Ric Suggitt walked off the pitch after his team's 22-19 win over South Africa, he wiped his forehead in a "that was close" type gesture. The USA had relinquished a 17-point lead to trail by two points with no time on the clock.

"They have a lot of speed on their team so we were definitely looking to put that under pressure and not give them too much space to run," USA Women's 7s captain Vanesha McGee said. "But we also wanted to use our speed against them and work them in different places across the field – not just on the wing – and I think we did that well."

The Americans did work other areas of the field, with Nathalie Marchino and Christy Ringgenberg cutting through the gut of the defense. The team also heeded coach Suggitt's call for a tighter defense.

"In the last game [Canada 12-12] we had some defensive struggles that we really wanted to clean up, especially around the breakdown, and our defensive line around that," McGee said. "I think we did a good job of that. We also had some different game plans as far as playing the South Africans versus the Canadians, so a lot of things were different in our minds regardless of how the first game went."

But for all those improvements, the game was marred by South Africa's massive comeback in the second half.

“I wouldn’t say we were nervous,” McGee said of the South Africans’ rally. “We definitely had a drop in our level of play for a few minutes, and they came away with some tries in that time. But we’re really good at keeping ourselves together, staying composed, using the energy of the girls coming onto the field to bring us back up. That did a lot for us.”

In particular, Doyle made a big impact. With no time left on the clock, the sub set up on the wing as Katie Dowty tapped through the free kick awarded after South Africa sent the kickoff into touch. After some steps on the sideline, Doyle shot into the try zone for the game winner.

“We have some fast people, and when we put them in, the level of our game goes up,” Doyle said.

“There was some stress,” Doyle said of the do-or-die, final play. “But I really like working under that kind of pressure. It hypes up your play, so it’s really fun.”

The USA only has Argentina left. South Africa and Canada defeated Argentina by a combined 58-0. Even though it’s not a gimme win for the USA, the Eagles will be most interested in the RSA v Canada game. If Canada wins, then the USA is guaranteed a spot in Cup Quarterfinals and possibly the top pool seed defending on the point differential. Otherwise, it’ll come down how the rest of the field does.