It wasn't pretty, but it worked. The USA Women 7s team is off to the Houston 7s Cup semifinals, thanks to a 15-7 victory over Russia.

The game was marked by some nerves and the little mistakes that often result, but the USA once again rallied from a deficit for the win.

The opening looked promising for the Eagles, as Vix Folayan cleared the ball down the touchline and smothered the Russian receiver. Unfortunately, the USA wing didn't roll away, and Russia quickly mounted a return attack.

Both sides threatened each other's line, with Ekaterina Kazakova relieving pressure with a 50-plus meter break, then the USA getting into Russia's 22 meter with breaks from Nathalie Marchino and Vanesha McGee. Handling errors squashed the Eagles' chances at the first score, and it was an errant pass into touch that set up Russia's first try.

After the lineout, speedster Baizat Khamidova got around Kelly Griffin on the wing and linked up with teammates to keep the ball alive and into the USA's end. The Eagles were penalized for coming in from the side, and Kazakova inched Russia closer to the line. After a few phases, Khamidova enjoyed an overload but stepped back inside for the easy try. Nadezda Yarmotskaya slotted the conversion for the 7-0 lead.

Messy ball and missed passes continued to hamper the USA's attacking opportunities, and a bit of luck on the sideline enable Kimber Rozier to move the ball to Lauren Doyle alone on the

wing. She had the pace to outrun two pursuers to the corner, 7-5. The USA had one more good scoring opportunity before the break, but the USA had try eyes and didn't realize an overload out wide.

Early in the second half, it looked like the USA had missed another scoring opportunity, after a blocked kick put the ball in McGee's hand. The poor pass out to Folayan allowed Russia's defense to adjust and force a scrum. But the USA answered nicely, as Katie Dowty pressured Russia's scrumhalf and forced a turnover. The ball worked out to Marchino, who had the overload but slid in between defenders for the try, 10-7.

Russia marched down the field during the next series and would have scored in the corner hadn't the finishing pass been ruled forward. Instead, Marchino tacked on some cushion on the next possession, hitting a half gap and outrunning a deflated Russian defense, 15-7.

The USA advances to the Cup semifinals against Australia, which defeated South Africa 17-12 in sudden death overtime.

USA 15
Tries: Marchino 2, Doyle

Russia 7
Tries: Khamidova
Cons: Yarmotskaya