

# Hot Bats Keeps Streak Alive

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CAPE GIRARDEAU, Mo. - It was a day of first homeruns for Lady Raiders Megan Cherinka and Jennifer Dorais as Middle Tennessee softball (9-5) won three games in opening day action of the Southeast Missouri Classic Saturday.

In game one, Middle Tennessee defeated Drake University 3-2. The Lady Raiders got on the board in the third inning when Dorais hit a double and scored on an error by Drake shortstop Lauren Smith. After reaching on the error, Erica Buhl scored on a Cortney Mitchell double.

Middle Tennessee added to their scoring in the top of the fourth when Michelle Wilkes knocked in pinch runner Brandy Davis. Drake knocked two runs in the bottom of the fourth.

Freshman Tiffany Childress pitched three innings allowing two runs on four hits and picks up the win to improve to 2-1. Senior hurler Stacy Preator, who threw the final two innings, takes the save, which is the first of the season for her.

Game two saw a blanking of host school Southeast Missouri as Preator returned to the mound to pitch six scoreless innings allowing only one hit and striking out six. Valerie Swanson closed out the game allowing one hit in the bottom of the seventh.

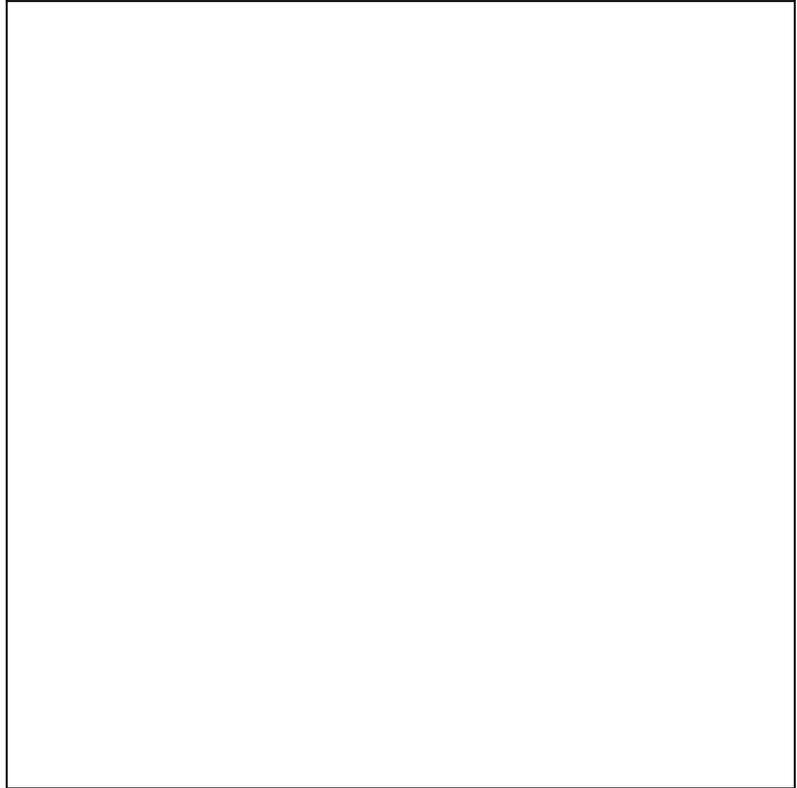
Middle Tennessee scored four runs in the top of the fourth as Cherinka hit a 1-0 pitch over the left field wall. It was the first homerun of her Lady Raider career, and the first homerun by a MT first baseman since Ashlie Way in 2001.

After Muriel Ledbetter drew a walk, and sophomore Leah Grothouse singled, Dorais hit a three-run homer over the left field wall. It was the first homerun by a MT second baseman since Rachel Atkinson in 1999. The two homeruns in the fourth was the first multiple homeruns in an inning by Middle Tennessee. The Lady Raiders added one more run in the top of the fifth and another in the top of the sixth.

In the final game of the day Middle Tennessee defeated Lipscomb 2-1 as freshman Muriel Ledbetter took the win and improves to 3-1. She pitched a complete game and gave up one hit.

Kip Phillips, who has reached base safely in twelve straight games, scored the first run for the Lady Raiders when Cortney Mitchell hit a double to send Phillips in. It was Mitchell's sixth double of the year and eighth RBI, and she scored on the same play from a Lipscomb error. Lipscomb scored their only run in the bottom of the second.

Middle Tennessee plays Siena Sunday at noon and closes out the tourney with Southwest Missouri at 2 p.m. The



Lady Raiders are currently on a six game winning streak.

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