# Blue Raiders Dropped by No. 9 LSU 2-0

## Place fourth at Easton Tiger Classic

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**BATON ROUGE, La. -** Middle Tennessee softball (1-4) placed fourth Sunday at the Easton Tiger Classic, after falling to No. 9 LSU 2-0.

The Blue Raiders reached bracket play on Sunday, thanks to its 6-0 win over Centenary Saturday. Middle Tennessee received a No. 4 seed in the final day of the tournament, facing 9th ranked and No. 1 seed LSU.

Middle Tennessee had scoring opportunities in the first and second inning, but it was LSU that got on the board first courtesy of Blue Raider miscues. Tiger Kristen Hobbs hit a one out single to get things started for LSU in the bottom of the second. After Blue Raider pitcher Lindsey Vander Lugt forced Andrea Smith to strikeout looking for the second out, it seemed Middle Tennessee would get out of the jam, but it wasn't meant to be. Erika Sluss hit a single and advanced to second on a Blue Raider throwing error and Hobbs moved to third. LSU scored off an RBI bunt single by Jazz Jackson, but LSU was held to one run when Sluss was gunned down at home to end the inning.

A two out double by Quinlan Duhon added to the LSU lead in the third inning. The double by Duhon scored Lauren Klein for the second Tiger run of the game. The inning ended when Vander Lugt forced Tayl'r Hollis to ground out to second base.

The Blue Raiders had two real scoring opportunities in the game and both centered on junior Ashley Cline. In the first inning, Cline drew a one out walk and then stole second. A sacrifice bunt by junior Katie Mielke moved Cline to third. Muriel Ledbetter was hit by a pitch and then stole second putting runners at second and third, but sophomore Martha Davis struck out swinging to end Middle Tennessee's scoring chance.

In the fourth inning, Cline struck out swinging for what appeared to be the third out of the, but LSU catcher Hobbs dropped the ball and Cline ran to first. Cline stole second and then turned around and stole third, but Mielke flew out to left field to end the inning.

Middle Tennessee had a base runner in six of the seven innings against LSU, but couldn't provide offensive support to push a run across. LSU pitcher Emily Turner forced every Blue Raider batter in the lineup to strike out at least once, ending the game with 12 strikeouts.

Vander Lugt took the loss in the game falling to 1-2 on the season. She tossed her second complete game of the season allowing nine hits, one earned run and striking out two.

Sophomore Justine Cerda was named to the 2007 Easton Tiger Classic All-Tournament Team.

Middle Tennessee returns to action on Friday, February 16 at the Worth Wildcat Classic hosted by No. 1 Arizona. The Blue Raiders open the tournament with the University of Virginia at 12 p.m. and Temple at 2 p.m.

**NOTES:** Junior Ashley Cline stole three bases in the Blue Raiders game against LSU on Sunday, she is a perfect 4-for-4 in stolen bases to start the season ... Freshman pitcher Lindsey Vander Lugt saw action in all five games at the Easton Tiger Classic, starting three games and two in relief ... Vander Lugt picked up the lone win in the tournament against Centenary, tossing her first complete game of the season and recording eight strikeouts, the most strikeouts in a game by a Blue Raider pitcher in two years ... Middle Tennessee suffered two consecutive shutouts by their opponents in the final two games at the Easton Tiger Classic ... As a team, Middle Tennessee has only three hits in its last 14 innings ... After five games, Cerda leads the club with four hits ... Middle Tennessee will face its second ranked team of the season when the Blue Raiders travel to Tucson, Arizona to play in the Worth Wildcat Classic and match-up against No. 1 Arizona on Saturday.

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