Blue Raiders Shock #15 Ragin Cajuns 5-3

Mielke hits three-run bomb in win

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LAFAYETTE, La. - Middle Tennessee softball (10-13, 1-1 SBC) pulled off the biggest upset in the program's history with a 5-3 win Wednesday over 15th ranked Louisiana-Lafayette (21-5, 1-1 SBC) in the opening day of Sun Belt action for both clubs.

"Tonight we are just going to enjoy this win," said Head Coach Leigh Podlesny. "We will try and come back tomorrow and hopefully get the series. We are happy but we aren't satisfied."

The Blue Raiders bounced back in a big way after dropping the first game of the day, 4-1, in doubleheader action. It was a homerun by catcher Katie Mielke that rallied the club to a four-run second inning and gave the team that extra boost in game two.

After a scoreless first inning, back-to-back singles by Muriel Ledbetter and Ashley Cline put runners on first and second. This set up some early game heroics for the catcher Mielke, who hit a three-run bomb over the left field wall. It was Mielke's fourth homerun of the season. Floyd followed with a double and she scored off a double by Catilin McLure.

"It was great to see some of our more unsung players get some big hits to help us in the game," Podlesny said. "There were great plays by Katie, Sam and Justine Cerda."

The Ragin Cajuns answered in their half of the second inning with a solo homerun by Desi Chatman to make the score 4-1.

McLure picked up her second hit of the game as she hit a one out single in the top of the fifth inning. Cerda added the insurance run, to make the score 5-1, when she hit an RBI single to score McLure.

Louisiana-Lafayette looked to have something cooking in the bottom of the fifth inning when the club had bases loaded and no outs. Holly Tankersly hit a two RBI single to score two runs and pull the Cajuns within two, 5-3. Blue Raider pitcher Lindsey Vander Lugt came into the game in relief after Floyd started and pitched a stellar four innings. Vander Lugt forced three consecutive Cajuns to fly out to end the threat.

Vander Lugt closed out the game and earned her first save of the year. She tossed three innings allowing three hits and notched three strikeouts. Floyd took the win and improves to 3-3 on the season allowing three runs and posting a season-high three strikeouts.

"I decided to start Sam in the second game because of how strong she had pitched in the last part of the first game," Podlesny said. "I felt Lindsey could use some more work in the bullpen and she is the kind of pitcher you like to put into relief in a tight game because she has so much control."

Mielke ended the game going 2-for-3 with three RBI, one run scored and her timely homerun in the second inning. McLure and Cline also had a multiple hit game with each getting two hits. Cline also scored two runs in the game.

Middle Tennessee attempted a rally in the seventh inning of the first game with the Blue Raiders down 4-1. Floyd hit two-out single up the middle and Cline hit a double to right field to place runners at first and second. Freshman Caitlin McLure drew a walk to load the bases but Cerda struck out swinging to end the threat.

Louisiana-Lafayette didn't waste any time getting on the scoreboard. Karli Hubbard hit a lead off single in the first inning and Tankersly got the Cajuns on the board when she hit a two RBI homerun over the left field wall.

The Ragin Cajuns added two more runs in the bottom of the fourth inning. Lacey Bertucci led off with a double and Courtney Trahan came in for Bertucci to pinch run. A ground out by Desi Chatman moved Trahan to third and she scored off an RBI double by Melissa Verde. ULL scored its second run of the inning off an RBI single by Lana Bowers that scored Verde.

The Blue Raiders avoided a shutout by scoring a run in the top of the fifth inning. Katie Mielke hit a one out double and scored when Cline hit a single and Mielke scored off a Ragin Cajun error.

Vander Lugt started the game and took the loss, falling to 6-9. She went 3.1 innings allowing all four runs, six hits, a walk and struck out four. Floyd came into the game in relief in the fourth inning and allowed two hits and struck out two.

The win over the Ragin Cajuns was the highest ranked team the Blue Raiders have defeated in school history. Middle Tennessee defeated No. 25 Texas A&M in 2001.

Middle Tennessee will play the rubber game with Louisiana-Lafayette on Thursday at 11 am. at Ragin Cajun Park.

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