

Blue Raiders Win in Series Opener

Vander Lugt strong in victory

April 7, 2007 · David Powell

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Lindsey Vander Lugt gave up just one earned run on six hits and Ashley Cline stole her 23rd base of the season as the Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders (19-21, 8-5 SBC) returned to Sun Belt Conference play with a win over the North Texas Mean Green (15-25, 7-6 SBC) at Blue Raider Field on Saturday, 3-1. The Blue Raiders returned to conference action in the first game of a doubleheader after dropping both games of a midweek doubleheader against in-state rivals Memphis on Wednesday. Vander Lugt (14-14) got the start for the Blue Raiders and picked up the



complete game win, giving up just one earned run on six hits while striking out five and walking one. During the series with Memphis she became the first freshman pitcher since Stayc Preator in the year 2000 to achieve 100 strikeouts in a season. Mean Green reliever Kristina Fowler (4-12) picked up the loss, giving up three runs on seven hits while striking out one and walking two over six innings. Although not the official starter, she threw the entire game for North Texas as she relieved starter Ashley Lail before the first pitch was thrown. The Blue Raiders got on board first in the bottom of the 2nd inning when Katie Mielke singled to the shortstop, driving in Ashley Cline for her 23 RBI on the season. Earlier in the inning, Cline stole her team-leading 22 base on the year. On the very next at-bat, Justine Cerda singled up the middle, driving in Katie Mielke and doubling the Blue Raider advantage. MT added another run in the bottom of the 3rd inning to take a 3-0 lead. North Texas cut into the lead in their half of the 4th inning when Kristina Fowler drove in Susan Waters and leaving the game at 3-1. Middle Tennessee had a chance to increase their advantage later in the inning but could not capitalize with the bases loaded as pinch-hitter Melissa Weiland ended the inning by grounding into a double play. The Blue Raiders held on despite the Mean Greens loading the bases in the top of the 7th inning en route to picking up their conference eighth win of the season. They topped their conference win total from last season when they defeated UL-Monroe last Sunday to give them seven on the year. Middle Tennessee takes on North Texas in the second game of the doubleheader at Blue Raider Field at 3 p.m.

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