Lady Raiders Rally To Earn Split At UAB

March 23, 2004 · MT Media Relations

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. - Middle Tennessee ended a four-game losing streak by storming from behind to salvage a split in the nightcap of its doubleheader at the University of Alabama-Birmingham Monday.

The Lady Raiders (11-11) saw a 4-0 lead evaporate in the opener as UAB came from behind to take a 5-4 win, but Middle Tennessee turned the table by showing tremendous fight by rallying for a 6-5 win in the second game.

"We've had a tough week on the road and the second game was a definite gutcheck," Lady Raider senior Cortney Mitchell said. "Coming back like that showed the team what kind of pride we do have. I think this lit a spark."

Mitchell was quite a spark in the doubleheader as she was 4-for-6 with two home runs, five RBI and three runs scored to lead the Lady Raider offensive attack. Mitchell unloaded on two Brittany Hodge pitches in the first game and homered in her first two at-bats to give her four round-trippers for the season. Mitchell tied a school record for single-game home runs and moved into No. 2 on the career home run list with 11. She's already the program's career leader in doubles with 38.

Unfortunately, for the Lady Raiders, Mitchell was the sole source of offense in the opener. Her solo blast in the first inning provided Middle Tennessee a 1-0 lead and then she cranked a three-run homer in the third to put the team on top 4-0, but UAB scored two in the fourth, tied the game with two in the sixth, and won it with a run in the bottom of the seventh.

Jennifer Dorais was 3-for-4 with two doubles and surging right fielder Katie Tompkins was 3-for-7 with three runs scored in the two games. Brittany Herald, Candice Littrell, and Brandy Davis also had multi-hit games in the twinbill.

After seeing a game get away from it in the opener, Middle Tennessee was on the verge of being swept until it came off the deck in resounding fashion to salvage the split. Trailing 5-1 after five innings, the Lady Raiders scored twice in the sixth and tacked on three in the seventh to rally for the win. Herald's two-out, two-run single with the bases loaded provided the winning margin. The

freshman was 2-for-4 with a double and four RBI in the win.

"I was just trying to get a hit (in the seventh). That was my concentration," Herald said. "It all came together. We wanted the game. It was very important to get the split and stay at .500. We didn't want to come out of here with a losing record."

Littrell entered the second game in the bottom of the sixth and immediately paid dividends with a one-out single to start Middle Tennessee's rally. Tompkins followed with a single, and Mitchell drove in one run with a third straight single. Herald's sacrifice fly to left field cut the deficit to 5-3.

Freshman pitcher Trish White (2-0) came on in relief of Herald in the bottom of the sixth and showed a great deal of fortitude to get out of a bases-loaded jam with no outs and keep the game within reach.

"The big thing is the bases were loaded and (White) had a 2-0 count on the hitter, but she stayed in there and had confidence," Lady Raider coach Cindy Connelly said. "That was huge. We could have lied down in that second game, but we fought back and walked away with it."

Melissa Weiland's one-out walk started Middle Tennessee's rally in the seventh, but the Lady Raiders answered did their best work with their backs to the wall. They were tailing 5-3 with one out and two outs when Littrell uncorked an opposite-field double to narrow the gap to 5-4. Tompkins followed with an impressive at-bat, fouling off several pitches and coaxing a walk. Mitchell collected an infield single, and then Herald delivered the two-run, game-winning single.

Middle Tennessee's will conclude its Spring Break trip with a doubleheader at Samford Wednesday. The original start time of 5 p.m. has been moved to 1 p.m.

Printed on May 24, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/2857