Lady Raiders End Trip With Split At Samford

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. - Middle Tennessee's softball team split its doubleheader at Samford Wednesday to complete its eight-game Spring Break trip with a 4-4 mark. The Lady Raiders (12-12) won the opener, 8-4, at Lady Bulldog Field, but dropped a 3-1 decision in the nightcap. The doubleheader featured two very different games as offense was the main course in the opener, but the second game was dominated by pitching. While the Lady Raiders provided plenty of offense, pounding out 10 hits (four of the extra-base variety), a pair of freshmen pitchers came up huge in the opener. Ashley Frizzell (2-0), who was outstanding in relief of starter Crystal Bobo, earned the win with 4-1/3 innings of three-hit relief, allowing one run, while rookie righty Trish White retired all five batters she faced to earn her second save. Brittany Herald and Cortney Mitchell led Middle Tennessee's hit parade in the first game with two hits each. Herald was 2-for-4 with a triple, three RBI and two runs scored, while Mitchell was 2-for-4 with her 12th double of the season and a pair of runs. The Lady Raiders started the fireworks with a three-spot in the top of the first when the first five batters reached base safely. Brittany Herald's single chased home Cortney Mitchell, who had singled, and catcher Angie Huebner followed with a double to give Middle Tennessee a 2-0 lead. The fourth consecutive hit of the inning - a Leah Grothouse single, plated Huebner and provided the Lady Raiders a 3-0 lead. The early lead was short-lived; however, as Samford came back with three runs of its own in the bottom of the first, highlighted by back-to-back two-out home runs Shelley Stanley and Jenna Dempski. Middle Tennessee regained the lead in the second when Candis Littrell opened the frame with a double and scored on Dani DeCamino's single. Brandy Davis supplied the Lady Raiders with a 5-3 advantage with a clutch two-out single to score Huebner, who had walked, in the third. Frizzell came of age in the bottom of the fifth when Samford had a golden opportunity to get the game even with runners at first and second and none out for the middle of the order. However, Frizzell wriggled out of the jam without allowing any damage and capped the inning when she struck Kelly Smith out looking. Samford pulled to within 5-4 with a run in the bottom of the sixth, but the Lady Raiders responded with three in the top of the seventh to account for the 8-4 win. Herald, the Lady Raiders' starter in the second game, and Samford's Susanna Meyer engaged in a classic

pitcher's duel in the nightcap. Herald went four innings, scattered five hits and allowed an unearned run before giving way to Bobo. Trailing 1-0, the Lady Raiders tied the game in the top of the fourth when Melissa Weiland was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded to send Grothause plateward. The game remained tied 1-1 until the bottom of the sixth when Samford broke through for two runs to give the Lady Bulldogs a 3-1 win.

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