

Lady Raiders Fall in Sun Belt Finals 19-0 to #9 Louisiana-Lafayette

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LAFAYETTE, La. - Middle Tennessee (35-23) went 4-2 in the Sun Belt Tournament play but lost 19-0 in the Sun Belt Tournament Championship game against No. 9 Louisiana-Lafayette (55-6) Saturday at Lady Cajun Park.

It was the third time since joining the Sun Belt four years ago that the Lady Raiders have made it to the conference championship game. Three games in one day, proved to be too much, however for the Lady Raiders.

Louisiana-Lafayette started the game with back-to-back homeruns by Holly Tankersly

and Danyeale Gomez to give the Cajuns an early 2-0 lead. Brittany Herald started the game on the mound but only went a third of an inning giving up two runs on three hits. Crystal Bobo came into the game for the final third of the inning and stayed in the game.

Louisiana Lafayette added seven runs in the top of the third and was highlighted by a grand slam by Tankersly. Gomez hit her second homerun of the game for the seventh run of the game. The Lady Cajuns added three more runs in the top of the fifth off a three run homer by Joy Webre. ULL added another six runs in the top of the sixth inning and the Cajuns hit their sixth homerun of the game when Lacey Bertucci hit a three run homer.

Herald took the loss in the game and falls to 4-4 to end a successful freshman campaign.

Middle Tennessee placed three on the first-ever Sun Belt All-Tournament Team. The Lady Raiders had Crystal Bobo, Leah Grothouse and Melissa Weiland voted all-tournament.

Weiland's one out homerun proved to be the game winner to lead the Lady Raiders to a 4-3 win over Florida International. The victory advanced the Lady Raiders to the Sun Belt Tournament Championship game.

Middle Tennessee scored two runs to start the game against FIU. Grothouse started the inning with



a one out single and advanced to second when Cortney Mitchell drew a walk and then the bases were loaded when Herald also drew a walk. An error by FIU allowed Grothause to score and Mitchell scored the second run on an RBI single by Weiland.

Weiland struck again in the top of fifth when her RBI double scored Herald for the third run of the game. She finished the game going 3-for-4 with three RBI and a run scored.

Florida International got on the board in the top of the sixth inning with two runs off two Lady Raider errors. The Panthers pulled within one run in the bottom of the seventh off an RBI single by Jennifer Owens. With two outs and runners at first and second, relief pitcher Herald forced Marlee Stapf to fly out to left fielder Brandy Davis for the third out and the win.

Freshman pitcher Ashely Frizzell started the game and went six innings allowing two runs on three hits and struck out struck out. Frizzell improved to 7-4 on the season and Herald picked up her first save of the year.

In earlier action, with the game tied 1-1 in the top of the 10th against New Mexico State, center fielder Katie Tompkins hit a lead off single and represented the game-winning run. Muriel Ledbetter hit an RBI triple to plate Tompkins giving the Lady Raiders the lead. Ledbetter scored on a New Mexico State error, which placed Leah Grothause on first. Cortney Mitchell's RBI single scored Grothause for the third run of the inning

Middle Tennessee broke a scoreless tie in the top of the fifth. Back-to-back errors by New Mexico State put Middle Tennessee runners on first and second. Right fielder Ledbetter hit an RBI single to plate pinch hitter Jennifer Grybash to give the Lady Raiders a 1-0 lead.

New Mexico State tied the game in the bottom of the fifth inning. After Crystal Bobo gave up a lead off double to Lindsay Hainzinger, she advanced to third off a sacrifice by Aggie Amanda Carver. Hainzinger tied the game off an RBI fielder's choice by Veronica Owens.

Bobo only allowed one run on five hits to keep the Lady Raiders in the game until their bats woke up. Bobo improved to 18-11 on the season.

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