Blue Raiders Defeat South Alabama 5-2

Return to action on Wednesday in doubleheader with Austin Peay

March 22, 2008 · David Powell

MOBILE, Ala. - Ashley Cline led Middle Tennessee to a series-high seven hits as the Blue Raiders (8-16, 3-5) rebounded from two losses with a 5-2 win over the South Alabama Jaguars (15-14, 3-3) at the Jaguar Softball Complex on Saturday afternoon. Middle Tennessee was looking to salvage a victory in the series against South Alabama after scoring just one run in route to dropping two games to the hosts on Friday. Lindsey Vander Lugt (5-9) started on the mound and got the win for the Blue Raiders. The Sophomore gave up no earned runs on six hits, while striking out one and walking two in the complete game. South Alabama starter Beth Pilgrim (9-5) picked up the loss for the hosts. The righty gave up four runs on five hits, while striking out two in 4.1 innings. Shannon Smith and Amanda Leggett also pitched or the Jaguars. They gave up a combined one earned run on two hits, while striking out three and waking one in 2.2 innings in relief. The Blue Raiders jumped out to an early 2-0 lead in the opening inning. Ashley Cline and Caitlin McLure both dropped bunt singles before Whitney Darlington's blooper to right field deflected off of Jaguar right fielder Kelsy Donaldson and into foul territory for a two RBI triple. Darlington went 1-for-3 with two RBI for MT. South Alabama cut the lead to 2-1 in the bottom of the 3rd inning courtesy of Aubrey Hudson's RBI grounder to shortstop Brittney Banania, scoring Evelyn Pare. The home team tied the game in the next inning when Kristen Hayes' hard shot to first base deflected off the outstretched glove of Darlington and allowed Jenny Stevens to score. Middle Tennessee re-

established a 5-2 lead during the top of the 5th inning in dramatic fashion. Justine Cerda and Brittney Banania both singled to start things off before Cline loaded the bases with a bunt single to the pitcher. Cline went 2-for-4 with two runs scored for the Blue Raiders. After McLure reached on a fielders choice with Cerda out on the play, Corrie Abel nailed a two RBI single through the middle. The pitcher received the relay throw from the centerfielder, only to stand outside of the pitching circle, keeping the play alive and allowing McLure to sneak across the plate from third base. Vander Lugt remained strong in the final two innings as Middle Tennessee held out for their third conference win of the season. The Blue Raiders return to action in a doubleheader against mid-state rivals Austin Peay Governors on Wednesday at 4 PM. Follow the action live on GoBlueRaiders.com with Russell Luna calling play-by-play.

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