Blue Raiders Open Series with 8-4 win over North Texas

Corrie Abel nails grand slam homerun

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DENTON, Texas - Justine Cerda and Katie Mielke provided the scoring punch early and Corrie Abel hit a grand slam homerun to put the game out of reach as the Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders (13-17, 6-6) won 8-4 over the North Texas Mean Green (19-21, 7-6) in the first game of a doubleheader at Lovelace Stadium on Saturday afternoon. Lindsey Vander Lugt (9-10) made her 17th start of the season and and the victory for the Blue Raiders. The lefty gave gave up two earned runs and scattered nine hits, while striking out 5 and walking none in the complete game outing. Kristina Fowler (7-8) got the start and the loss for the Mean Green. The senior gave up seven earned runs on 10 hits, while striking six and walking six in 7.0 innings. Middle Tennessee took an early lead in the opening inning. Ashley Cline was hit by the first pitch of the game before Katie Mielke advanced on a fielders choice with Cline reaching second on a throwing error by North Texas third baseman Sarah Jones. Martha Davis nailed a single into short left field to load the bases. Justine Cerda crushed her second double of the season with a two RBI shot down the left field line, driving in Cline and Mielke to push MT out front 2-0. Cerda was 2-for-3 with two RBI for Middle Tennessee. The Blue Raiders doubled their lead to 4-0 in the 2nd inning thanks to some timely hitting by two seniors. Cline laid down a two-out bunt to put a runner on base before Katie Mielke nailed her third homerun of the season with a two RBI blast just over the fence in left field. Cline and Mielke combined for three hits, two RBI and four runs scored for the visitors. North Texas cut the lead in half in the 3rd inning off singles off Katya

Muller and Mariza Martinez to make it 4-2 in favor of Middle Tennessee. Corrie Abel was on hand in the top of the 6th inning to blow open the MT lead in dramatic fashion. Caitlin McLure walked to put a runner on before stealing second base and Ashley Cline layed down a bunt to put runners on the corners. Katie Mielke followed by walking on four straight balls to load the bases and bring up Abel. The Sophomore crushed the first grand-slam homerun of her career to put the Blue Raiders ahead 8-2 The Mean green scored two runs in the bottom of the inning to cut the lead to 8-4 but Middle Tennessee didn't allow North Texas to cut any further into the lead as they returned to .500 in Sun Belt Conference play for the first time since early in the season. The Blue Raiders conclude today's doubleheader against North Texas at 4:40 PM. Follow the action live by selecting the links on GoBlueRaiders.com.

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