MT Softball falls 8-6 to Florida Atlantic

Blue Raiders can not overcome early deficit

April 27, 2008 · David Powell

BOCA RATON, Fla. - Katie Mielke and Corrie Abel hit back-to-back home runs but Middle Tennessee went down early and could never recover as the Blue Raiders (20-28, 9-11) lost 8-6 to the Florida Atlantic Owls (34-22, 16-6) in the final game of a series at FAU Softball Stadium on Sunday afternoon. Lindsey Vander Lugt (14-19) picked up the start and the loss for the Blue Raiders. The sophomore gave up seven earned runs on 14 hits, while striking out one and walking one, in the complete game. Amber Barton (19-16) got the start and the loss for the Owls. The righty gave up five runs on 14 hits, while striking out four and walking two, in 5.0 innings. Ross Gressley also pitched for Florida Atlantic, working the final 2.0 innings for her first save of the season. The Owls took a 4-0 lead in the opening inning. Jessica Myers and Amber Barton singled before Caitlyn Bliss hit a RBI single to left field, scoring Myers. Barton scored on an error and Lauren Crandall walked to put two runners on again to bring up Blair Bodenmiller. The shortstop singled through the left side, scoring Bliss and Crandall to leave FAU with a four-run advantage. Middle Tennessee cut the lead to 4-1 in the top of the 2nd inning. Reigning Sun Belt Player of the Week Martha Davis doubled to right field and Whitney Darlington smacked a single up the middle before stealing second to put runners at second and third base. Caitlin McLure nailed a RBI single to left field, scoring Davis. Florida Atlantic increased their lead to 6-1 in the bottom of the 2nd inning. Myers and Melissa Moore led off the frame with singles to put two runners in scoring posiition and Bliss hit her second RBI of the game with a single to shortstop Brittney Banania, who made a diving stop to prevent the ball from leaving the infield. However, her errant throw to first base allowed Moore to come come across the plate and leave the home team firmly in the lead. The Blue

Raiders made it 6-3 in the top of the 3rd inning off back-to-back solo home runs by Katie Mielke and Corrie Abel. The Owls responded with two runs of their own to make it 8-3 in the bottom of the 3rd inning when Becky Brandies homered after Kerri Croney singled to center field to put a runner on base. Middle Tennessee scored two runs over the next two innings off two RBI singles by Abel to trim the FAU advantage to 8-5. The Blue Raiders further cut into the lead in the final inning as Caitlin McLure started things off with a single to right field before Ashley Cline smacked a RBI triple down the left field line, scoring McLure. The comeback attempt would fall just short as Mielke and Abel grounded out to end the game. The Blue Raiders conclude Sun Belt Conference regular season play with a three-game series against rivals Western Kentucky at Blue Raider Field beginning Friday at 3 PM.

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