

May 3, 2008

Blue Raiders win 6-3 over WKU on Senior Day

Cerda clinches series with game-winning, three-run homerun in 5th

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee surrendered an early lead but powered ahead with a [Justine Cerda](#) three-run homerun as the Blue Raiders (22-29, 11-12) clinched a series victory over the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers (26-28, 8-15) by winning 6-3 Saturday at Blue Raider Field.

Middle Tennessee and WKU split two games of a doubleheader on Friday to make Saturday's senior day contest the deciding game of the series.

[Lindsey Vander Lugt](#) (16-20) made her third straight start of the series in the win, giving up two earned runs on nine hits, while striking out two and walking none, in the complete game.

WKU starter Jennifer Kempf (11-12) got the loss, giving up three earned runs on nine hits in 7.0 innings.

Middle Tennessee used two doubles to open the scoring in the bottom of the 1st inning. [Ashley Cline](#) led off by hitting a ball just over the head of WKU third baseman Rebecca Horesky for her team-leading eighth double of the season before advancing to third on a [Katie Mielke](#)'s sacrifice bunt. [Corrie Abel](#) nailed a ball into the body of the pitcher for single before [Martha Davis](#) lased a RBI double into the gap in right field, scoring Cline. Kelsey Dortch, making her first start of the season as a designated player, lined a ball up the middle that was bobbed by shortstop Kelsey McCauley, allowing another run to cross the plate.

Western Kentucky cut the lead to 2-1 in the top of the second inning off a solo homerun to centerfield by Horesky.

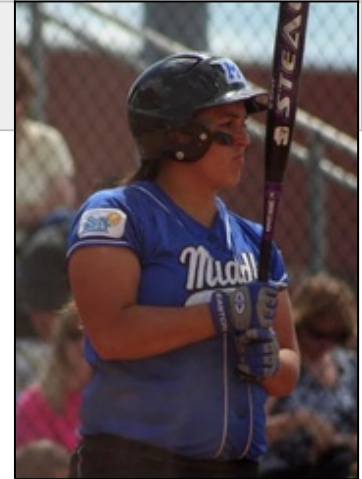
The Hilltoppers tied game off an error by Brittney Banania. Horesky singled to left field to lead things off before advancing to third base off a single by current Sun Belt Conference Play of the Week Rachele Boucher. WKU scored when Lindsay Antone's shot to second base was mishandled by the Blue Raiders shortstop.


Western Kentucky took a 3-2 lead in the top of the 5th inning but should have scored more if not for a great defensive play by Middle Tennessee. Terri Ellingsworth and Boucher singled to start the inning, bringing up Lindsey Antone. The right fielder drove a RBI to centerfield, scoring Ellingsworth, but Boucher was out at home plate after a tremendous throw from Abel.

The Blue Raiders rebounded to take a 6-3 lead in the bottom of the 5th inning off Cerda's three-run blast. Senior Cline was hit by a pitch before senior Mielke beat out a bunt to the pitcher to put two runners on base. Davis reached on a fielders choice and Abel drove a RBI single up the middle to tie the game at three runs apiece, bringing up Cerda. The first baseman nailed her first pitch well over the fence in left field for her fourth homerun of the season to give the Blue Raiders the advantage.

The Middle Tennessee athletic department would like send a special thanks to senior's [Ashley Cline](#), [Whitney Darlington](#), [Amy Candioto](#) and [Katie Mielke](#) for their contributions to Blue Raider softball and the entire Middle Tennessee State University community.

The Blue Raiders return to action for the opening round of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament against the Florida International Golden Panthers in Troy, Ala. on Wednesday at 12:30 PM.



Junior Justine Cerda was 2-for-3 with a homerun, three RBI and a run scored to lead the Blue Raiders to victory in their final home game of the season (MT) 

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