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Softball Loses in Championship Game to UL

MT Media Relations

LAS CRUCES, NM--The Middle Tennessee softball team had its season come to an end Sunday afternoon but made a strong run advancing to the finals of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament where they lost to No. 19 Louisiana-Lafayette, 6-4.

The Lady Cajuns were the only team in the SBC that Middle Tennessee did not have a winning record against. The Lady Raiders went 0-6 against UL during the season, although five of the six losses were by a combined margin of seven runs.

UL got on top first on a solo homerun by tournament MVP Alana Addison in the first inning. The Lady Raiders issued two straight intentional walks to Addison, who was 15-fo-20 against Middle Tennessee in six games including two homeruns and 10 RBIs during the season.

"She has killed us all year," said head coach Karen Green. "We just decided we were going to make someone else beat us."

Middle Tennessee tied the game at one in the bottom of the first on a two-out RBI by Jennifer Martinez.

UL took a 2-1 lead in the top of the fourth before exploding for four runs in the fifth building a 6-1 advantage.

The Lady Raiders battled back in the bottom of the fifth scoring two runs to pull within three and scored another run on a RBI triple by Kip Phillips in the sixth to make it 6-4, but UL held on down the stretch winning the 2001 SBC Tournament Championship.

"We played them six times this year and five of those were close just like this one," said Green. "Right now, they are just a better team than us."

Middle Tennessee ends the season with a school record 41 wins, a runner-up finish in the conference tournament, and a third place finish in the regular season.

"Obviously, we would have liked to have finished first," Green said. "But I think this season says a lot about the players we are recruiting and character of this team."

The Lady Raiders advanced to the championship game after breaking open a 1-0 game in the sixth inning with seven runs against Western Kentucky for an 8-0 win.

Middle Tennessee had five hits including a game-ending homerun from Laura Brockman, who collected her fourth straight hit as a pinch hitter in the tournament.

Lindsay Azevedo and Kristina Hieb also had a big game as each went 2-for-3. Hieb drove in three runs while Azevedo had two RBI.

Jennifer Martinez threw her third straight shutout against the Hilltoppers to break Jaclyn Story's school record for shutouts in a season at 12. She also struck out two to become the first player in school history to record 200 strikeouts in three straight seasons.

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