Blue Raider softball inks four in early signing period

Talented pitchers, hitters highlight balanced class

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee softball signed four players to National Letters of Intent during the early signing period as announced by head coach Sue Nevar on Monday. Pitchers Janele Robinson and Katie McDougald, infielder Kristi Marquez and local product Ashia Terry will become Blue Raiders in the fall of 2009. "I am very excited about what these players add to our team. We are getting the core together to take this program to another level and they are key pieces of the puzzle. These players are very eager to learn and take risks and those are the characteristics we need to play Middle Tennessee softball. We want the kids who are humble and know it is a privilege to be a Blue Raider." Robinson finished her junior season with a 14-4 record and a miniscule 0.37 ERA with 139 strikeouts in 93.0 innings for Cumberland High School in Toledo, Ill. She also hit .419 with three homeruns and 30 RBI in route to being named Second Team All-State by the Illinois Coaches Association. She is a three-time all-conference winner and has led her Cumberland to three-straight regional championships. Robinson has also been honored on the all-area team by the Decatur Herald and Review for the past three seasons. "Janele brings not only pitching but very steady play at first base and a clutch bat. She is capable of playing at any position and that is great to have on our team," Nevar said. "She is a strong on the mound and throws a variety of pitches. She is a player who is a really big catch for this program. I am excited to think of the potential Janele has working with [pitching coach] Margo Pruis next season." McDougald hit .339 in 25 games as a junior for Boca Raton High School in Boca Raton, Fla. She serves as a team captain in both softball and volleyball on her high school squads. The pitcher owned a 1.90 ERA in 179.0 innings and was named to the all-county conference

team as a junior. McDougald also is a member of the National Honor Society, Academic Honor Roll and Dean's List. She has been awarded three presidential academic awards for her exceptional performance in the classroom. "Kailey is going to bring great pitching to us. She has a lot of movement on her pitches and is more of a finesse pitcher," Nevar said. "Kailey is also an outstanding outfielder and second baseman who has good wheels and a great bat. We are getting an all-around player who is an outstanding student in the classroom." Marquez appeared in 25 games as a junior for Boca Raton High School, notching 58 hits in just 77 at-bats for an impressive .517 batting average. She nailed 10 triples and 20 RBI, while stealing 20 bases as a junior. The infielder was named first-team all-conference during the past season and serves as a team captain in softball as well as cross country. Marquez also performs in the classroom, being honored with a President Education Award in recognition for outstanding academic achievement. "We are very fortunate to have landed Kristi. She can play anywhere in the infield and we are looking for her to come in and be an immediate contributor," Nevar said. "She is a very strong hitter who can go to either field and has the potential to be in an RBI slot. Kristi and Kailey are coached by a former college softball player from Florida International, so they both have had great coaching and know the game already." Terry is a highly-regarded local product out of Riverdale High School in Murfreesboro. The talented outfielder hit .361 with six homeruns, 35 RBI as a junior and is considered to be an all-around player after stealing 22 stolen bases in 2008. Terry was named to the AAA Mid-State First Team by the Middle Tennessee Softball Coaches Association after leading the Warriors to their fifth-straight District 7-AAA title last season. "Ashia is out of Riverdale High School and is going to play in the outfield. She has the speed we have been looking for to add to our already fast outfield," Nevar said. "Offensively she is going to be a terror at the plate. She is a power hitter who also has great speed and is a compact player. We are also excited to have a local player from here in Murfreesboro in our program." The Blue Raiders open the season against Virginia at the East Carolina Invitational on February 7.

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