Blue Raiders drop two at FSU Invitational

Host Troy to open Sun Belt play on Tuesday

March 7, 2009 · David Powell

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - Middle Tennessee managed just three runs in two games as they fell to the Liberty Flames and #25 Florida State Seminoles in the final day the Florida State Invitational on Saturday. The Blue Raiders split two games at the tournament on Friday, beating the Flames 3-2 in the first game before losing 4-3 to Bethune-Cookman to conclude the day. Despite out-hitting their opponents, the Blue Raiders (4-10) allowed a five-run third inning to drop a 5-2 decision to the Flames (4-9) in the first game of the afternoon. Blue Raider pitcher Kellie Head (0-2) picked up the loss in her first start of the season, allowing five runs on four hits in 2.2 innings of action. Caty Juston had an impressive performance in relief for Middle Tennessee, pitching a no-hit shutout over the final 4.1 innings. Liberty's Tiffani Smith (4-4) gave up two runs on five hits and struck out seven batters in the complete game win. The Flames took advantage of a Middle Tennessee error to take the lead in the top of the third inning. The Blue Raiders retired two of the first three batters to begin the frame, before Martha Davis had a ball tip off her glove to extend the inning. Catcher Keely McMillon walked to load the bases before Kaylee West hit a two RBI single to right field. The next batter, Beth Bennett, hit a three-run homerun over the left field fence to make it 5-0 in favor of Liberty. The Blue Raiders pulled two runs back in the bottom of the fifth inning. Tobie Joy stole second and advanced to third base on a Brittney Banania groundout before Kandra Singleton nailed a RBI single to second base. Singleton then stole a base of her own and scored on Davis' third hit of the game, a double to deep center field. Davis went 4-for-5 with an RBI and run scored to lead the Middle Tennessee offense in the two games. The Blue Raiders managed one hit before the final inning as they fell 6-1 to #25 Florida

State in the final game of the Invitational. Lindsey Vander Lugt (3-5) dropped her first game in four starts for the loss. The sophomore gave up four earned runs on nine hits, while striking out four, in the complete game outing. Terese Gober (9-2) picked up the win for the Seminoles, throwing a one-hit shutout and striking out six batters in three innings of relief. Sarah Hamilton started the game for the home team, giving up no runs and striking out seven in two innings of action. Florida State scored three runs in the bottom of the third inning to go in front. Michelle Snyder was hit by a pitch and scored during the next at bat when Davis' on-target throw went past Tobie Joy covering first base. A pair of Carly Wynn and Ashley Stager RBI singles rounded out the scoring for the home team. In the fourth, Blue Raider center fielder Kelsey Dortch lined a ball up the middle with two outs before stealing second base, but Barrett struck out looking on a close call to end the inning. The Seminoles added their fourth run of game in the bottom of the frame with a Snyder RBI single through the left side before rounding out the scoring with a Stager two-run homerun in the bottom of the fifth inning. Middle Tennessee got on the board in the final inning. Davis smacked a liner off the glove of the FSU third baseman and into the left field for a single to start things off. Two batters later, Barrett singled up the middle and Davis scored on the play due to a throwing error by McConn at second base. The Blue Raiders open Sun Belt Conference play with a doubleheader against the Troy Trojans on Tuesday afternoon. Opening pitch at Blue Raider Field is set for 1 p.m.

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