Blue Raiders win one against JSU

Face off against Lipscomb on Wednesday

April 28, 2009 · David Powell

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - It was a tale of two comebacks as Middle Tennessee won 6-5 and fell 9-5 in a non-conference doubleheader against Jacksonville State at Blue Raider Field on Tuesday. The Blue Raiders were coming off a successful weekend where they won their second Sun Belt conference series of the season by taking two of three games from Florida Atlantic. Middle Tennessee (14-32) scored the game-tying run in the sixth inning and won the game with a RBI single in the bottom of the 10th to take a 6-5 win over the Gamecocks (36-10) in the first contest. Lindsey Vander Lugt (11-16) allowed three earned runs on seven hits in the 10-inning, complete game win. Ashley Eliasson (14-5) gave up two runs on one hit over the final 4.2 innings of action. Karla Pittman worked the opening five innings for the away team, giving up four runs on nine hits. Kelsey Dortch led off the Blue Raider half of the inning with her ninth double of the season and McLure used her speed to beat out an attempted sacrifice bunt before Martha Davis singled just out of the infield on the right side to make it 1-0. With runners at second and third, Natalie Ysais continued her strong play of late with a sacrifice fly to left field to drive in McLure and Kaycee Popham closed out the inning with her first career homerun, a two-run shot to left field. McLure went 2-for-5 with a run scored, RBI and stolen base for the Blue Raiders. Jacksonville took advantage of a Middle Tennessee error to score two runs in the top of the second inning. The Gamecocks put two runners on with no outs before first baseman Popham fielded a bunt and fired over to third base in attempt to get the force out, but her throw was well over the head of Davis and allowed both runners to cross the plate. The Blue Raiders failed to score after a Kandra Singleton single, Dortch double and McLure walk loaded the bases in the second inning. The

Gamecocks evened the game at four runs apiece in the top of the fourth. Hillary Downs singled through the middle and scored off a Chrissy O'Neal RBI single to centerfield. In the fifth inning, Blue Raider second baseman Tobie Joy came up big defensively with a runner on third base, saving a run with a diving stop and firing over to first base for the final out of the inning. Jacksonville State took its first lead of the game in the top of the sixth inning. Jackie Jarman doubled up the middle to lead things off before scoring two batters later off a Downs sacrifice fly to left field. Middle Tennessee evened the game in the bottom of the frame when Singleton scored on a wild pitch with two outs. Davis provided a bit of defensive magic in the top of the eighth inning. With one out and a runner on third, the senior fielded a ball, tagged the runner leading off third and fired over to first base for a double play. Singleton and Jutson loaded the bases with two-out walks and McLure slapped a single to left field to drive Shelby Barrett across the plate for the game-winning run. The Blue Raiders took a 4-1 lead into the second inning, but allowed eight runs over the final three frames as they fell 9-5 to Jacksonville State in the second game. Vander Lugt (11-17) worked the final three innings of the contest for the loss. The junior gave up four earned runs on seven hits. Kellie Head got the start on the mound for the Blue Raiders, giving up three runs on six hits in four innings of action. Kayla Collins (2-1) allowed one earn run on one hit over four innings in the victory. In the opening frame, Davis nailed a base hit off the pitcher and put herself in scoring position with her fifth stolen base of the season before Ysais smashed her second double of the day to make it 1-0. The Blue Raiders took a 2-0 lead in the second. Jutson led off the inning with her second double of the season before Joy put two runners in scoring position by reaching on a fielder's choice and stealing second. Two batters later, McLure reached on an error by Gamecocks shortstop Mary Beth Ledbetter, scoring Joy. The Gamecocks made it 2-1 in the top of the third before Middle Tennessee added two more over the next two innings off a Davis solo homerun and Brittney Banania's 15th run scored on the season. Jacksonville State cut the Blue Raider lead to 4-3 in the fifth inning when O'Neal nailed a two-run double to deep center field, scoring Ledbetter and Downs. The Gamecocks added four more runs in the sixth frame before scoring two more in the top of the seventh off a Sellers RBI triple to the right field gap and a Jarman groundout to third base. Middle Tennessee cut their deficit to 9-5 in the final inning after McLure drew a leadoff walk and Davis smashed a RBI double to left field. Davis finished the game 3-for-4 with a homerun, two RBIs, two runs scored and a stolen base. The Blue Raiders return to action for a doubleheader at mid-state rivals Lipscomb on Wednesday afternoon. Opening pitch at Draper Diamond is set for 5 p.m.

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