

May 2, 2009

## Blue Raiders drop doubleheader at WKU

### Ysais hits first-career homerun

David Powell



Freshman catcher Natalie Ysais hit her first-career homerun with a towering drive to center field in the second game of the doubleheader.

(MT) 

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**BOWLING GREEN, Ky.** - Junior pitcher **Lindsey Vander**

**Lugt** did not allow an earned run in the first game of the doubleheader as Middle Tennessee fell 7-2 and 11-3 to Western Kentucky at WKU Softball Field on Saturday afternoon.

The Blue Raiders came into the day needing three wins over the Hilltoppers and three losses by Louisiana-Monroe to clinch a spot in next week's Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

Middle Tennessee (14-33, 5-17 Sun Belt) allowed seven runs off four errors as they dropped the first game 7-2 to the Hilltoppers (31-17, 13-9 Sun Belt).

Vander Lugt (11-18) gave up no earned runs on eight hits in her 21st complete game of the season.

Ryan Rogge (24-8) allowed two runs on five hits over 7.0 innings. The righty also struck out eight batters.

Western Kentucky took advantage of four Blue Raider defensive mistakes to score seven runs in the bottom of the third inning. Brooke Reed led off with hard shot that Blue Raider third baseman **Martha Davis** did well to field, but the senior's throw to first base was off target.

Shannon Smith doubled down the left field line to drive in a run before scoring on a Tobie Joy fielding error.

Four more runs came across the plate before pinch hitter Ashley Contreras picked up an RBI on a fielder's choice.

Middle Tennessee came close to scoring in the top of the fourth frame. **Caitlin McLure** led off with a well-hit single through the right side, before stealing second and advancing to third on a Davis fly out to left field. However, the visiting team was unable to drive the junior home and Kaycee Popham struck out to end the inning.

The Blue Raiders cut their deficit to 7-2 in the top of the seventh. Ysais led off with her first-career homerun, a massive blast well over the fence in center field to score the first run.

The next batter, Popham, smacked a double to the gap before advancing to third on a Shelby Barrett single. **Brittney Banania** picked up her sixth RBI of the season on a fielder's choice.

Davis hit the 20th homerun of her career, but the Blue Raiders allowed four runs in the opening inning, as they fell 11-3 to WKU in the second game.

Caty Jutson (1-10) gave up five earned runs on six hits over the first two innings in the defeat.

**Kellie Head** worked the final two innings for Middle Tennessee, giving up five runs on eight hits in the relief appearance.

Jennifer Kempf (8-9) allowed three runs on four hits in the complete game outing for the Hilltoppers.

WKU's Smith was hit by a pitch and Boucher put two runners on with a single, before Terri Ellingsworth nailed a three-run homerun just inside the left field foul pole to make it 3-0 in favor of the home team. Sam Cronk picked up an RBI later in the inning.

Western Kentucky scored three more runs in the second inning, before putting up four more in the third to make it 10-0. Smith and Boucher both picked up multiple RBIs during the scoring stretch.

The Blue Raiders got on the board in the fourth inning off a solo shot by Davis, the senior's team-leading sixth homerun of the season.

The Hilltoppers scored one run in the fourth before Middle Tennessee pushed two across in the next inning.

Banania walked to lead things off and **Kandra Singleton** smashed an infield single to the right side. First baseman Lindsay Antone fielded the ball and looked to fake a throw to first base on the play, but the ball slipped from her hand and allowed Banania to streak home.

**Kelsey Dortch** smashed her second hit of the game with a RBI shot to centerfield to make it 11-3.

The Blue Raiders conclude the 2009 season against the Hilltoppers on Sunday. Opening pitch is set for 1 p.m.

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