

# Pitchers throw Softball to victory

## Team evens record on Saturday

February 20, 2010 · Christian Lemon

**WOODSTOCK, Ga.** - The Middle Tennessee softball team rebounded strong on Saturday riding two strong pitching performances at the Phyllis Rafter Memorial tournament in Woodstock, Ga., as the team defeated Alabama State and Western Illinois to even its 2010 season record at 2-2 after a disappointing opening day of play on Friday.



The morning session against Alabama State was highlighted by the winning work of freshman pitcher Janele Robinson. Robinson struck out eight batters in seven innings, giving up three runs, all earned. The Toledo, Ill., native battled through three tough early innings before eventually settling down and blanking the pesky Hornets in the final four frames. The Blue Raider defense played tight behind Robinson retiring the last nine ASU batters.

The team played behind most of the game, but a late sixth inning rally, sparked by a Kandra Singleton walk, followed by errors on the next two plays, brought the Blue Raiders their first runs of the contest.

In the seventh, following two quick MT outs, Brittney Banania walked and was then pushed to third on a Singleton single. Caitlin McLure's bunt single scored Banania and Kelsey Dortch followed with another bunt single to score Singleton. A wild pitch to Corrie Abel brought home McLure from third for the Raiders' fifth run.

"This game was great for our confidence," said Nevar. "We came from behind and Janele showed she had what it takes to play at this level."

The Blue Raiders' evening match-up pitted the squad against the then tournament-undefeated Western Illinois Leathernecks. MT shut down the WIU attack largely on the arm of senior lefty Lindsey Vander Lugt, easily taking victory 3-0.

Vander Lugt tossed a near flawless seven innings with five strikeouts, surrendering six hits and no walks. The Olympia, Wash., native showed the guts of a champion after being roughed up in the tournament-opening contest Friday morning against Southern Illinois. Using the drop ball to perfection, 10 of Vander Lugt's outs came on groundouts to the left side of the infield making light

work for third baseman Krisit Marquez and shortstop Banania. Vander Lugt improves her record to 1-1 on the season.

Vander Lugt commented, "I knew I could do better after yesterday's outing. I had to learn from the game, while putting it behind me and moving on to today. Right now we are riding high and must continue to play well going into our opening conference series against Troy in two weeks."

Sophomore slugger Kaycee Popham blasted a solo home run to give Vander Lugt the necessary run support to take the victory.

"The team learned they could play at this level," Nevar continued. "A win on Sunday against Mercer and we will come out of the tournament with a winning record after facing some good teams. Defensively, our corner infielders made some great plays to help us to victory. We must stay focused on the task at hand and handle our business against Mercer tomorrow."

A Blue Raider win tomorrow afternoon would be the first time since February 2004 the program would have a winning record at any point in the season. The team is 1-4 versus the Bears all-time. Sunday's opening pitch will be at 1 p.m. Full results and coverage will be available on [goblueraiders.com](http://goblueraiders.com) after the game.

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