

# Softball drops finale at Phyllis Rafter Memorial

## Late inning rally couldn't overcome Mercer lead

February 21, 2010 · Christian Lemon

**WOODSTOCK, Ga.** - A four run sixth inning rally for the Middle Tennessee softball was not enough to bring the squad back in an 8-4 lose to the Mercer Bears on Sunday as missed opportunities in earlier frames with Blue Raider runners in scoring position would prove costly in the lose.

Middle Tennessee could not take advantage in both the fourth and fifth innings with runners at both second and third. Tried as they may, hitters squandered chances and did not to bring them across the plate to score runs.

Head coach Sue Nevar said, "We had the chances today, but we did not take advantage. We did not have as many RBIs as I would have prefe<sup>r</sup>re this weekend, but our speed causes many of the errors other teams produce."

Senior pitcher Lindsey Vander Lugt started the game for the Raiders throwing four innings giving up three runs, two earned, and three strikeouts. Freshman Janele Robinson

would relieve Vander Lugt in the top of the fifth. The Bears would find their bats in the top of sixth, beating up the rookie hurler for six hits and five runs all scored with two outs for an 8-0 lead. Vander Lugt would return in the seventh inning stifling the Mercer attack giving up just one hit and adding a strikeout.



"Lindsey's pitch count was higher than we wanted this weekend. She was not as sharp today after so many pitches in her previous two games. Janele pitched well yesterday and we felt confident in her this afternoon."

The team rallied in the bottom half of the sixth producing four earned runs on Mercer pitcher Kari Chambers. Corrie Abel and Natalie Ysais kicked off the rally each singling and raising their ERA numbers to .313 and .357, respectively for the season. Kaycee Popham, Kandra Singleton, Kristi Marquez and Brittney Banania would all knock in runs nearly doubling the team's RBI total for the season.

However, in the bottom of the seventh, Chambers found her rhythm and shut down the Raiders for three consecutive outs.

The team finished the Phyllis Rafter Memorial tournament with a record of 2-3 being outscored 29 to 14. Singleton and Ysais led the squad with five crucial hits. Popham's two RBI's and Caitlin McLure's three stolen bases and three runs scored were a team highs. McLure's three stolen bases on the weekend places her fifth most all-time in Middle Tennessee history.

"In each game this weekend, everyone stepped up on some level. Today the power and backside of the line-up played well. Yesterday the speed and bunters in the top of our order helped win against Western Illinois. Now we must get everyone playing together."

The team returns to action this Wednesday as they travel to Cookeville, Tenn. to take on the Golden Eagle of Tennessee. The doubleheader will begin at 1 p.m. with full coverage and live stats will be available on [goblueraiders.com](http://goblueraiders.com).

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