Softball falls to Troy 4-1

Fifth inning rally could not get Raider past Trojans

March 4, 2010 · Christian Lemon

TROY, Ala. - Middle Tennessee senior Caitlin McLure tallied her sixth stolen base of the season in a 4-1 loss to Troy, Thursday afternoon, as the Blue Raider softball team fell to 2-6 overall and 0-3 in Sun Belt play after a conference opening series to the Trojans.

McLure's steal was the sixth of the season on six attempts for the Anaheim, Calif. native giving her 51 for her career. She continues to climb the Middle Tennessee record book as she is now just one behind Kim Blair for fourth most stolen bases in school history.

The swipped bag came in the top of the fifth inning with Brittney Banania on second after doubling to drive in freshman Nina Davenport on the only run of the game for the Blue Raiders. This would be of the squad's biggest opportunity with Troy already up 4-1 and the tying run at the plate. Unfortunately, the team was again unable to bring runners across the plate to tie the game.

Inability to hit with runners in scoring position was determining factor for the team in the mid-week three game series as the team recorded only one hit with runners in scoring position.

Pitcher Lindsey Vander Lugt was saddled with the loss after throwing 3.0 innings of work giving up two unearned runs and one walk. She had no strikeouts and fell to 1-4 on the season.

"Lindsey pitched well enough to win, but we did not produce the runs to help," said head coach Sue

Nevar. "We know we can play against the best pitchers and teams in the conference."

Janele Robinson came in the top of the fourth inning to relieve Vander Lugt. The rookie took command early halting the Trojan offense surrendering no runs. She pitched 3.0 innings tallying three strikeouts and a walk.

"We want to get Janele stabilized to be our starter next season. We are using her in relief to get her experience and more innings pitched. She has done really well and we expect good things from her as she develops.

Second baseman Kandra Singleton made the heads up play of the game. In the bottom of the fourth, with the Trojan base-runners in a double steal situation at first and third, Singleton cut off catcher Natalie Ysais' pick off throw and tossed it back to Ysais who made the tag preventing the run from scoring.

The early goings have been rough for some of the team's proven hitters with upperclassman, McLure, Corrie Abel and Kelsey Dortch hitting well below their career average.

"The early cancellations of the season have really cut into our at bats. We have not seen as many pitchers and we must get more at bats for our hitters. These players have what it takes to perform at the plate. When they do, we will be very productive."

The team will open tomorrow's Bulldog Invitational against the Golden Gophers of Minnesota beginning at 11 a.m. followed by Elon at 1:15 p.m.

"We have to come out get hits early in the tournament. Every game, so far, we are playing from behind. When we getting out early will help our pitchers throw well.

Full livestats, results and coverage will be available at GoBlueRaiders.com.

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