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Freshman strong in Belmont victory

Janele Robinson pitched 5.1 strong innings in victory

Christian Lemon

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ATHENS, Ga. - Middle Tennessee's Janele Robinson threw 5.1 innings of work en route to a 6-4 Blue Raider victory over Belmont as the team improved 4-7 on the season with the Bruins dropping to 1-11.

In victory, the Blue Raiders scored six runs on three hits and four errors. Belmont tallied four run off of sevens and five errors.

Robinson struck out three Bruin hitters while allowing five hits and two runs, zero earned. Her record would maintain at 1-0 as her season ERA dropped to 4.97.

Middle Tennessee struck first in the second as [Kaycee Popham](#) came home on a wild pitch from Belmont hurler Ashley Byers. The Blue Raiders had loaded the bases to that point from a Popham walk, Jessi Couch reach on error and [Kandra Singleton](#) hit by pitch. Byers managed to induce a ground out ending the frame allowing only one scored run.

In the fourth, Robinson worked through a jam with Belmont runners at second and third and one out. The rookie receive excellent defensive support on two great catches from outfielder [Caitlin McLure](#) and second baseman Singleton at second for outs to kill the rally.

"As a pitcher you have to be able to depend on your defense," said Robinson. "I want to go out and strikeout as many batters as I can, but this is a team game and I need their help to do well."

Byers took a no-hitter into the top of the fourth before MT freshman Kristi Marquez would end hopes by driving a ball to leftfield for a hit. Couch reached on a fielder's choice with Marquez advancing on a throwing error. Singleton would walk, before [Brittney Banania](#) notched her sixth RBI of the season upon reaching on a throwing error. Couch would also score on the play, unearned. Banania leads the squad with in RBIs.

Robinson would find trouble again in the fifth with the threatening Bruins leading off with two consecutive singles. The freshman maintained composure and put down three of the next four batters without giving up a run.

"You will make mistakes and give up hits. I turn the page when I make mistakes and move on to the next hitter."

The Bruins would find the scoreboard in the sixth after two costly MT errors and Robinson wild pitch would bring two runs home. [Lindsey Vander Lugt](#) took the mound in a relief appearance. She could not bandage the bleeding, allowing two more runs and giving Belmont the lead 4-3.

Middle Tennessee found resilience at bat in the sixth with a rally started on a Banania walk to be followed by a McLure bunt single. A Byers' wild pitch would advance both runners and Banania would score. Abel walked and a [Natalie Ysais](#) single to third would push home McLure for the lead. An errant Belmont throw on the play scored Abel giving the Blue Raiders a lead 6-4 which they would not relinquish.

Vander Lugt shut the door in the seventh one, two, three en route to her third victory of the year giving her an overall record of 3-5.

The team showed great patience taking seven walks.

Middle Tennessee maintains a decisive series advantage, defeating the Bruins for the 17th time in the 21 meetings between the two schools.

The Blue Raiders will return to action tomorrow as they take on host and top 10 ranked Georgia at 1:30 p.m. Full results and coverage will be available on GoBlueRaiders.com.



Caitlin McLure scored the winning run in the Blue Raider's 6-4 comeback victory over Belmont in the second day of the Bulldog Invitational in Athens, Ga. (Athletic Communications)

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