

# Softball to host Louisiana-Monroe

## Important Sun Belt match-up this weekend for softball

April 1, 2010 · Christian Lemon

### **MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -**

The Middle Tennessee softball team returns to action as the squad is set to play host to the Louisiana-Monroe Warhawks in a conference series this weekend at Blue Raider Field.

The first pitch of Friday's doubleheader is set for 3 p.m., which will be immediately followed by the second game a 5 p.m. The series finale will be played Saturday at noon.

This weekend will be a critical series for both teams as each enter the weekend with a Sun Belt Conference record of 2-4. The two teams are tied for the eighth place, and because only the top eight teams are eligible for the post-season Sun Belt tournament, both squads will be fighting to improve their records going forward.

"This weekend is critical for us," said head coach Sue Nevar. "We have to come out of this weekend with at least two win if not three. For us to have success in the conference, we have to be winning games at home against evenly matched opponents."



Louisiana-Monroe holds an 8-4 series advantage all-time between the two schools. Last season in Monroe, the Warhawks swept the three games by a combined score of 10-3. Middle Tennessee won the 2008 series taking two of three in Murfreesboro.

In 2010, Corrie Abel is Middle Tennessee's leading hitter with a .301 batting average and 22 hits. Abel and Kaycee Popham each enter the series with a four game hitting streaks for the Blue Raiders.

Pitcher Lindsey Vander Lugt has been the Blue Raider's workhorse in the circle, throwing 100.0 innings with a respectable 2.52 ERA. She has 90 strikeouts and 10 of the team's 11 wins this season. The Olympia, Wash., native will look to get back in the win column as she has dropped her last two contests. Prior to the two losses, Vander Lugt was riding a career-high seven game win streak. Vander Lugt was masterful against the Warhawks last season, pitching 12.2 innings over three games with a 0.55 ERA and 12 strikeouts.

"We have had spotty play from some players and it is time that everyone gets on the same page. When we start playing as a team, we will have success."

Brianna Love leads ULM with a batting average of .364 and 28 hits, and Roxane Cassel holds the top number in the power categories with 20 RBIs and six homeruns. Love was the top hitter in last year's series going 4-9 with a double and four RBIs.

In the circle, four pitchers have played a significant role in ULM's 3.20 combined ERA and .261 opponent batting average. Kandace Causey leads the squad in strikeouts with 59, averaging more than one strikeout per inning. Causey pitched 15.2 innings in the series last season, striking out 23 Blue Raider batters and posting a 0.89 ERA in two games.

Live stats, audio and full coverage of all three contests will be available at GoBlueRaiders.com.

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