Softball set for important week

Team to play four conference games in the next five days

April 28, 2010 · Christian Lemon

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee softball team is set to play five games in the next five days as they will begin their late season push in hopes of qualifying for the Sun Belt Conference post-season tournament.

The Blue Raiders enter the week 19-23 overall with a conference record of 5-13. MT currently sits in an eighth place tie with WKU for the last remaining tournament bid. After a mid-week game in Huntsville, Ala., against Auburn on Wednesday at 6 p.m., Middle Tennessee will travel to Bowling Green, Ky., to face the Hilltoppers on Thursday at 5 p.m. in what could be the most important game of the season. The Blue Raiders will then travel to FAU for a weekend conference series in hopes earning three important wins. Saturday's doubleheader will begin 6 p.m. EST with the series finale to start at noon EST on Sunday

This weekend, WKU will square off against South Alabama in a three-game set. USA sits in seventh place, just one game in front of both Middle Tennessee and Western Kentucky. Every conference win is at a premium this late in the season.

"We have fought and hung around enough to give ourselves a good shot at the last tournament bid," said head coach Sue Nevar. "We are coming off a good week last week cannot afford to play poorly going forward."

Last week, Middle Tennessee played its best softball of the season, going 4-0 and sweeping non-conference doubleheaders against Tennessee State and UT-Martin. Lindsey Vander Lugt continued to lead the way for the Blue Raiders with three complete game victories. The senior posted an impressive 1.33 ERA on the week with 16 strikeouts and two walks.

On the year, Vander Lugt is 17-14 with a 2.59 ERA and 164 strikeouts in 186.2 innings.

Natalie Ysais was the team's leading hitter, going 7-11 in the four games, working two walks and two hit by pitch for an on-base percentage of .733. The Riverside, Calif., native drove in three runs.

Middle Tennessee just missed the SBC tournament last season in what was an injury-ridden campaign.

Full results and coverage for all this week's games will be available on GoBlueRaiders.com.

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