Softball falls in tournament opener to Louisiana, 3-1

Team play South Alabama tomorrow at 12:30 p.m.

May 12, 2010 · Christian Lemon

MOBILE, Ala. - The Middle Tennessee softball team dropped its opening game of the 2010 Sun Belt Conference tournament to Louisiana 3-1. The Blue Raiders will play South Alabama tomorrow at 12:30 p.m.

In the loss, the Blue Raiders' one run came off four hits. MT had three errors and left four runners on base. The Ragin' Cajuns had seven hits, one error and left seven on base.

Lindsey Vander Lugt performed well in the loss, tossing all six innings, striking out five, while allowing two walks and one earned run. Vander Lugt's five strikeouts give her 610 for her career tying her with Stayc Preator for second most by a Middle Tennessee pitcher.

Louisiana opened up the scoring in the first as Christy Orgeron hit her 55th RBI of the season to score Vallie Gaspard from third, making the score 1-0 after one inning.

In the top of the second, Natalie Ysais was robbed of a sure home run when UL leftfielder Erikka Murphy reached over the fence to pull back what would have been the tying run. Later in the bottom half of the inning, the Blue Raiders worked through a bases loaded jam with no one outs to keep the pressing Ragin' Cajuns from expanding their lead. For the first out, Kristi Marquez snared a hard line drive to third. Vander Lugt then caught a comeback shot to the pitcher and tossed the ball to first before the UL runner could tag up, completing the double-play and ending the inning.

Ragin' Cajun catcher Lana Bowers continued to give Middle Tennessee fits in 2010. The Crosby, Texas, native extended the to 2-0 after three innings when she blasted her fourth home run of the season off a Blue Raider pitcher.

Jessi Couch broke the shutout in the fifth, when she blasted her fourth home run of the season on what was just the second MT base-runner of the game to that point making the score 2-1. Louisiana answered in the bottom half of the inning moving the score to 3-1. Middle Tennessee showed great fight defensively as the squad battled through a bases loaded situation with one out and surrendered just the one run in the inning.

Middle Tennessee sparked a rally in the seventh when Natalie Ysais singled to right field with no outs. Kandra Singleton pinch ran for Ysais, then reached second safely on a Jessica Ives fielder choice. Singleton and Ives would move into scoring position when Kaycee Popham grounded out to the pitcher. UL pitcher Brittany Cuevas regained her composure and retired the next two hitters to end the game, 3-1.

The Middle Tennessee softball team will return to action tomorrow when they face South Alabama in an elimination game at 12:30 p.m. Full results and livestats will be available on GoBlueRaiders.com.

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