Weiland Blasts Two Homeruns in Blue Raider Sweep of Troy

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee softball (17-31-1, 5-3 SBC) relied on clutch hitting and the long-ball to sweep Troy (25-32, 3-5) 1-0, 8-6 Saturday in a Sun Belt Conference doubleheader at Blue Raider Softball Field.

The wins moved Middle Tennessee into a tie for second place with Florida International in the Sun Belt Conference race. FIU split with Western Kentucky earlier in the day.

It took 13 innings for Middle Tennessee to win game two of the series. The Blue Raiders invoked the international tie-breaker rule at the start of the 10th inning, and in doing so, Martha Davis was placed on second base to start the 13th inning. With Troy up 6-5, Melissa Weiland, who had a huge day, hit a single to reach first and advance Davis to third. Muriel Ledbetter hit her 13th double of the season to score Davis and tie the game at six. Troy attempted to intentionally walk Kristine Reed, but she wouldn't have any of that, as she stuck out her bat to get a base hit and load the bases with one out.

The heroics to win the game were up to sophomore transfer Katie Meilke and she didn't disappoint. Mielke hit a frozen rope to left center to score Weiland and Ledbetter and secure the Blue Raiders' fifth straight win.

"Melissa and Katie are two players you love to have at the plate in clutch situations," said Head Coach Leigh Podlesny. "They are consistent players and have a never quit attitude."

After two scoreless innings, Troy got on board first with two runs. Trish White, who started the game, walked Felicia Hammer and Amanda Ragans to start off the inning, and a fielder's choice allowed Angie Coteat to reach first and load the bases. A two RBI single by Heidi Johnson gave the Trojans the early lead.

White tossed three innings before she was replaced by Samantha Floyd, who hadn't seen action on

the mound since her injury. She tossed two scoreless innings before giving up a run in the sixth inning. Weiland hit her second homerun of the day in the bottom of the sixth inning to pull the Blue Raiders within one run. Davis also scored on the long ball as she got on board when Trojan hurler Angela Lopez hit her.

Middle Tennessee tied the game in the bottom of the seventh inning to force extra innings. A sacrifice fly by Justine Cerda scored Reed, who reached base on a single.

Two scoreless innings, in the eighth and ninth inning, forced the game into the 10th and the international tie breaker rule. It seemed whenever Troy would come up with a big score, the Blue Raiders would turn around in their half of the inning and have an answer. Of course, the biggest score of all came in the 13th inning to secure the win.

Floyd picks up her first win as a Blue Raider. She improves to 1-3 on the season after tossing 10 innings allowing four runs on nine hits and striking out two.

Game one was a pitching duel between Middle Tennessee's Laura Moore and Troy's Laine Harcourt. Moore won the battle when Weiland hit a homerun over the left centerfield wall off Harcourt, in the bottom of the sixth inning, to give the Blue Raiders the 1-0 lead.

It was the second shutout of the season for Moore and her seventh complete game. She also improves to 8-10 on the season allowing six hits and striking out four. Since Moore returned to the lineup, after her injury, she is 3-1 with a 0.97 ERA.

Middle Tennessee will attempt to bring out the brooms and secure its first complete Sun Belt series sweep of the season on Sunday for the final game against Troy. First pitch is set fro noon at Blue Raider Softball Field.

NOTES: Junior Shelby Stiner stole her 13th and 14th bases of the season ... Stiner now becomes the first player in three years to have swiped 14 bases ... Junior Melissa Weiland's six homeruns this season ties her for fourth for homeruns in a season ... Weiland has 15 for her career ... The Blue Raiders are now in tie for second place with FIU ... The five-game winning streak is the longest of the season ... Middle Tennessee is now 4-0 in the renovated Blue Raider Softball Field ... Stiner's 46 hits for the season is just four shy of her moving into 10th place in the Blue Raider record books for hits in a season ... Middle Tennessee is currently 7-3 in its last 10 games ... The Blue Raiders have 29 homeruns as a team and are just six shy of breaking the Blue Raider record for homeruns in a season.

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