

# Softball heads to College of Charleston Classic

## Five-team tournament begins Friday

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**MT. PLEASANT, S.C.** -- The Blue Raider softball team will look to rebound from a tough opening to 2012 when they return to the East Coast this weekend to participate in the College of Charleston Cougar Classic.

The three-day tournament will feature the host Cougars along with Lipscomb, Middle Tennessee, Virginia Tech and Wagner. The Blue Raiders (0-4) will open play on Friday at 3 p.m. CT against College of Charleston with a second game at 7 p.m. against an opponent to be determined.

Saturday's slate has Middle Tennessee squaring off with Wagner at 3 p.m. before facing Lipscomb at 5 p.m. The Blue Raiders will wrap up play in the tournament when they meet Virginia Tech on Sunday at 11 a.m.

"Our goal this weekend is to come out and be aggressive offensively, defensively and on the base paths," said Middle Tennessee head coach Sue Nevar. "We will be facing quality competition, so we need to set the tone early."

The Cougars enter the tournament with a record of 6-1 after sweeping a midweek doubleheader against Charleston Southern. Meanwhile Lipscomb (3-3) went 2-0 last weekend while hosting the Lady Bison Round Robin Tournament and Virginia Tech (7-3) lost three of four games in the ACC/Big 12/SEC Challenge. Wagner will be opening its 2012 season at this weekend's tournament.



Middle Tennessee hopes to get on track after a disappointing beginning to the season at last weekend's Charlotte Classic. The squad held the lead or was tied in three of its four contests in Charlotte before eventually falling in all four games.

The Blue Raiders clobbered five home runs in the tournament while the pitching staff did not allow a single long ball to their opponents. In addition, the team amassed a .430 slugging percentage over the weekend compared to a .354 clip achieved by the opposition.

Senior Kaycee Popham leads the team at the plate this season. The first baseman batted .455 with a home run and three runs batted in last weekend. She also leads the team in slugging at .818. Meanwhile second baseman Kayla Toney maintains a .444 average after one weekend of play. The Hendersonville, Tenn., native also tallied a home run, two RBIs, a pair of walks and four runs scored in Charlotte.

Freshman Samantha Nieves got her Blue Raider career off to a nice start with a solid opening weekend. The shortstop hit .308 with a home run while leading the team with four runs knocked in and a pair of doubles.

Follow every pitch of the Cougar Classic via live stats courtesy of College of Charleston which can be viewed [here](#). Periodic updates will also be provided via the Middle Tennessee softball social media pages on Twitter @MT\_Softball and on Facebook at the MTSU Softball page.

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