Softball falls in five innings to No. 17 Louisville

Blue Raiders drop 10-1 contest

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KNOXVILLE, Tenn. -- A second-inning Kelsey Woodruff solo home run was all the offense Middle Tennessee could muster on Friday afternoon as the Blue Raiders fell to No. 17 Louisville 10-1 in five innings in their opening game at the Tennessee Classic.

The game was delayed roughly an hour due to rain and lightning that moved through the Knoxville area. Once the inclement weather subsided, it took both teams an inning to settle in as they went quietly in the initial frame.

Woodruff put the Blue Raiders up 1-0 in the top of the second with her second home run of the season.

The lead would not last long, however, as Louisville responded with four runs via three home runs in the bottom of the second, taking advantage of a strong wind gust blowing out to center field. Taner Fowler and Alicia Wolny led off the inning with consecutive solo shots before Whitney Arion put the Cardinals up 4-1 with a two-out, two-run shot over the left field fence.

Louisville extended its lead to 7-1 with three more runs in the fourth. With runners on first and second with one out, Wolny punched an RBI double to left field and Jordan Trimble followed with a sacrifice fly to make it 6-1. Katelyn Mann's run-scoring single up the middle then put the Cardinals up 7-1, knocking Middle Tennessee starter Jordyn Fisherback out of the game.

Natalie Ysais and Kaycee Popham tallied consecutive one-out singles to put runners on first and second with one out in the top of the fourth. Louisville starter Tori Collins was able to hold Middle Tennessee at bay, though, as she retired Woodruff on a slow roller in front of the plate before Laura

Dukes struck out looking to end Middle Tennessee's scoring threat.

The Cardinals put another three-spot on the scoreboard in the bottom of the inning highlighted by a Katie Keller two-run single.

Needing a run to extend the game, Collins sat the Blue Raiders down in order in the fifth, giving Louisville a 10-1 victory.

"Today was a tough one," said Middle Tennessee head coach Sue Nevar. "We simply did not do what we needed to do in order to beat a very good Louisville team."

Middle Tennessee dropped its record to 3-6 on the year while the Cardinals went to 13-0 with the victory.

Woodruff paced the Blue Raiders at the plate with the team's only run coming on her home run. Meanwhile Arion, Fowler and Wolny led the Cardinals with their second-inning long balls.

Collins went all five innings for Louisville, allowing just one earned run on four hits while striking out five to receive the win. Fisherback got the loss after giving up seven earned runs in 2.2 innings pitched.

Middle Tennessee will look to bounce back on Saturday when they meet the Dutch National Team in an exhibition game that has been recently rescheduled to 2 p.m. CT. The Blue Raiders will wrap up play in Knoxville on Sunday with contests against Tennessee at 3:30 p.m. and Murray State at 7 p.m.

Each game of the Tennessee Classic will offer live statistics which will be available courtesy of Tennessee and can be accessed 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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