Softball looks to take momentum to Troy

MT coming off emotional victory

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TROY, Ala. -- Fresh off a thrilling, emotional win over FIU on Wednesday, the Middle Tennessee softball team will look to carry its momentum on the road as the squad heads south to take on Troy in a three-game Sun Belt series beginning Saturday.

The Blue Raiders and Trojans will meet for a doubleheader Saturday beginning at 1 p.m. CT with a second game following shortly after its conclusion. The series finale is set for Sunday at 1 p.m.

"This will be another test against a quality Sun Belt opponent," said Middle Tennessee head coach Sue Nevar. "I am very happy with how we have pitched and played defensively recently. We just need to start getting more timely hitting. Hopefully we will be able to put it all together this weekend."

Middle Tennessee captured the final game of its series with FIU in walk-off fashion Wednesday. Third baseman Kristi Marquez rocketed a one-out single to left to score Samantha Nieves from third to give the Blue Raiders the 2-1 victory. It was the team's third walk-off victory of the season as Middle Tennessee defeated Eastern Michigan in the bottom of the seventh on March 10 while also knocking off Eastern Illinois in similar fashion in the second game of their doubleheader on March 14.

Troy enters this weekend's series with an overall record of 28-16, 7-9 in the Sun Belt. The Trojans defeated No. 22 Florida State 4-3 on Thursday after taking two-of-three from FAU at home last weekend.

The Blue Raiders received a trio of impressive pitching performances earlier this week against FIU. Shelby Stinnett began the series by tossing a complete game, allowing just two earned runs in her seven innings. Caty Jutson followed with another terrific outing as she limited the Panthers to just one earned run while also throwing all seven innings. The Phoenix, Ariz., native then picked up the

win in the series finale, going the final 3.2 innings while not surrendering a run.

Caitlin McClure was the starter of Wednesday's Game 3 and she provided the squad with another solid start. The freshman has taken advantage of her recent opportunities, limiting opponents to only three earned runs over her last 12 innings pitched.

A balanced offensive attack led Middle Tennessee against the Panthers. Nine different Blue Raiders tallied a hit in the series including four who notched at least two knocks. Meanwhile freshman Katherine Tucker recorded her first-career hit with a double in the second game of Tuesday's doubleheader.

Middle Tennessee also turned in several strong defensive efforts against FIU. The Blue Raiders committed just three errors over the three games while making a number of dazzling plays in the field.

Live stats will be available for each game of the series 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.

Fans are once again encouraged to follow the Blue Raiders via Facebook and Twitter during their road trip to Troy. Behind-the-scenes pictures and videos will be uploaded to the sites throughout the weekend.

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