Montalvo earns Defensive Player of the Year award

Assistant coach had just three errors for Akron Racers of NPFL

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ROSEMOUNT, Ill. - Middle Tennessee is pleased to recognize softball assistant coach Kelley Montalvo, who last month was named the Wilson Defensive Player of the Year for the National Professional Fastpitch League along with Amber Patton of the Chicago Bandits.

The award is given to the best player(s) who were most consistent in their fielding positions.

"I've been playing in the league for three years, and when I saw when that award was an option, I made that a goal of mine that, before I retire, I would win that award," Montalvo said. "I take pride in defense."

Montalvo, a third baseman for the Akron Racers, finished the season with 43 putouts, 93 assists and just three errors for a .978 fielding percentage.

"Playing in the pro league to me is just another step out of college, another chance to keep playing," Montalvo said. "And, you're playing against the best girls in the country—Cat Osterman and Monica Abbot—these girls that have been around the game. It's a challenge to be up against these girls, and to play with them is an honor."

The NPFL is a four-team league with league offices in Hermitage, Tenn., and the Racers are in their 10th year in the league.

Montalvo is in her first year as the hitting and outfielder's coach for MT and believes her experiences can impact the Blue Raiders' athletes.

"I've been through it and I know what they're going through," Montalvo said. "Yes you have to score

runs, but you can prevent the runs. If a pitcher has a good game, you rarely get a ball, so you need to be ready when your chance comes."

As for next season, Montalvo isn't ready to announce plans on whether or not she will return to the Racers.

"It hasn't been talked about yet," Montalvo said. "I've always said that job comes first, and whatever coach (Breeden) needs me to do, I'll do it. I don't know if I'm ready to retire yet though."

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