MT Can't Hold Off USA, Loses 6-2

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Middle Tennessee (21-18, 3-8) battled through the first seven innings on Saturday against South Alabama (27-11, 8-1), but couldn't hold off the Jags in the end and fell 6-2. The loss puts the Blue Raiders in an 0-2 hole in the series heading into tomorrow's finale. The Blue Raiders once again started off promisingly, grabbing a 1-0 lead in the top of the fourth on a USA miscue. With Josh Archer at third, Marshall Nisbett stole second base, but the throw from Jag catcher Shane Scoville sailed into center field, allowing Archer to trot home. The Jags evened the score in the bottom of the fourth. Scoville redeemed himself with an RBI single that plated Ryan Mulhern. Middle Tennessee grabbed the lead once again in the top of the fifth when Troy Harp hit a Clark Girardeau offering over the left field wall, putting the Blue Raiders up 2-1. Once again the Jags didn't wait to tie the score. Erik Smallwood blasted a homer into left-center field to knot the score at 2-2. The score remained 2-2 until the bottom of the eighth. The Jags finally found an answer for MT reliever Chris Mobley. Through the first 1-2/3 innings of work, the Kingsport native had not allowed a baserunner. After hitting Mulhern with a pitch, Mobley surrendered a two-run homer that put the Jags in the lead 4-2. Parker later added a run with an RBI single and then scored himself on a delayed steal of home, giving the Jags an insurmountable 6-2 lead. MT starter Steven Kines continued to pitch well, giving up two runs in 5-1/3 innings, but didn't factor into the decision. Mobley took the loss to drop to 3-3 on the year. USA starter Clark Girardeau, making his first start in three weeks due to a pulled ribcage muscle, pitched five innings, allowing two runs on three hits before yielding to Bert Heath. Heath tossed the last four innings, allowing three hits and no runs for the win, improving to 6-2. The Blue Raiders and Jags will concluded their series tomorrow with a first pitch set for 1 PM.

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