

Blue Raiders Defeat No. 17 Kansas, 6-5

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Newcomer Jarrett England scored twice and drove in a pair of runs, and freshman Shay Horseman gave up the lead before pitching two solid frames to pick up the win, as Middle Tennessee defeated 17th-ranked Kansas, 6-5, Friday afternoon at Reese Smith Field.

The Blue Raiders took a 5-3 lead into the seventh after England drove in two runs with a double to deep centerfield in the sixth, giving Middle Tennessee starter John Williams a chance at a victory. But Horseman was greeted rudely in the seventh by KU, as Matt Tribble tripled off the rightfield wall and Casey Spanish followed with a double to left. Spanish later tied the game at five on a single from Sean Flynn, though Horseman (1-1) struck out the side in the inning.

The Knoxville, Tenn., native then set down the final six batters of the contest to get the win, striking out six in three innings of work in relief of Williams. Williams allowed three runs on five hits with three punchouts in six strong innings, a much better performance after last Friday's disappointing outing for the junior in the season-opener against Jacksonville State.

The Blue Raiders took the lead again in the bottom of the seventh when Shane Kemp drew a one-out walk, stole second and went to third when the throw from Flynn sailed into centerfield. Nate Jagers then fisted a single into rightfield for his fourth hit of the day, driving in what would be the game-winner.



The Jayhawks went down in order in the eighth and ninth, though Chad Cooper made a spectacular play for the final out of the game, catching a one-out liner off the bat of Travis Metcalf and throwing him out at first.

Middle Tennessee (2-2) got an early 1-0 lead in the first when Chuck Akers scored on a Jagers single to left. But the Jayhawks (11-4) took the lead in the third when Flynn blasted a Williams fastball over the leftfield wall for a two-run homer.

Chris LeGuenec doubled down the leftfield line to lead off the fifth for the Blue Raiders, and England came in as a pinch-runner. Marcus Taylor followed with his own two-bagger, this one down the rightfield line, to knot the game at two.

The Jayhawks took the lead in their half of the sixth with an RBI single to left by Ryan Baty, but then the Blue Raiders got three in the their half of the frame to take back the lead.

Jagers doubled to leadoff but was out when he got too far off the bag on a grounder to third by Josh Archer. Cooper then singled before Brett Carroll flied out for the second out of the inning. England, in his first career at-bat in the Blue and White, scorched a 2-2 pitch from KU starter Kevin Wheeler to the base of the centerfield wall, plating both runs. England then scored on Taylor's single to center, chasing Wheeler from the contest after 5.2 innings. The KU starter allowed five runs on nine hits with five strikeouts after entering the game 2-0 with a 2.49 ERA.

Brandon Johnson (3-1) got the loss for the Jayhawks after allowing the unearned run in the seventh. Johnson threw 1.2 innings and fanned two, giving up one hit before giving way to Ryan Knippschild, who got the final two outs in the eighth.

Metcalf and Flynn each had two hits for the Jayhawks, who had their six-game winning streak snapped. Jagers went 4-for-4 with two RBIs and Taylor also drove in a pair and had two hits.

GAME NOTES

Nate Jagers went 4-for-4 in the game, the third four-hit game of his career and the first since May 12, 2002, against Arkansas-Little Rock ... KU's Matt Tribble extended his hitting streak to 15 games with a triple in the seventh ... KU pitching coach Steve Abney was thrown out of the game with one out in the bottom of the eighth for arguing with home plate umpire Manny Salazar.

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