

Archer's Homer Provides 7-6 Win

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Sophomore Josh Archer lined an 0-1 pitch over the leftfield wall for his second home run of the day to lead off the bottom of the ninth, giving Middle Tennessee a 7-6 victory over Rutgers Saturday afternoon at Reese Smith Field.

The Blue Raiders held a two-run lead heading into the ninth, but the visiting Scarlet Knights (0-4) used a walk, a single and a wild pitch to set up the game-tying single to right from Rich Canuso, knotting the game at six. Archer hit a low fastball just over the wall in left to lead off the bottom of the ninth and give the Blue Raiders (3-2) their second win in a row.

Middle Tennessee pitching allowed a dozen hits to the free-swinging RU bats, as five of the visitors had two hits apiece. Rutgers touched Blue Raider starter Steve Kline for eight hits in 5.2 innings with only three strikeouts. Chase Swing relieved Kline in the sixth and gave up three hits in 2.2 innings, departing with two on in the ninth.

Danny Borne got the only batter he faced, striking out Vinny Esposito, but Borne



uncorked a wild pitch that allowed the two base runners to move to second and third. Chris Mobley (1-0) came into the game and gave up the single to right just out of the reach of Blue Raider second baseman Nate Jagers, plating the tying runs for the Scarlet Knights.

Middle Tennessee pounded out a season-high 14 hits in the contest, with every spot in the order collecting at least one hit. Shane Kemp, Brett Carroll and Archer each had a pair of hits, with Carroll and Archer both driving in a pair of runs in the win.

Rutgers got on the board first in the game when Canuso scored in the second on a ground ball off the bat of Alberto Vasquez. The Blue Raiders tied the game in their half of the second after back-to-back doubles from Carroll and Chris LeGueneec.

RU got single runs in the third and fourth on a single to center from Graig Badger and a two-base error by Blue Raider left fielder Kemp. But Middle Tennessee tied the score again in the bottom of the fourth, with Cooper scoring on an error and Marcus Taylor singling home Carroll.

Archer's first homer of the day came in the bottom of the fifth, a high drive that cleared the wall deep in left-center for a brief 4-3 advantage. But the Scarlet Knights tied it in the seventh, as Esposito singled to right off Swing, plating Badger to tie the game at four.

Middle Tennessee took the lead again in its half of the seventh when Kemp singled to center with one out and Archer was intentionally walked. Jeff Beachum was then hit by the pitch to lead the bases and Carroll delivered a single to left, scoring Kemp and Archer for a 6-4 lead.

The single also chased Rutgers starter Shaun Parker, who allowed six runs on 11 hits in 6.2 innings and threw 111 pitches. OJ DeChristifano (0-1) got the final out in the seventh and took the loss after allowing Archer's leadoff home run in the ninth.

Matt Wolski, Jeff Frazier, John Defendis, Badger and Canuso all had a pair of hits for Rutgers in the loss.

The Blue Raiders end their season-opening six-game homestand Sunday with a 1 p.m. contest against Kent State.

GAME NOTES

The Blue Raiders had 14 hits as a team, a season-high, and every spot in the order had at least one hit ... Middle Tennessee made six errors in the contest, the most since committing six at Tennessee Tech on March 11, 2002.

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