

Cajuns Take Finale, 5-3

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LAFAYETTE, La. - Louisiana-Lafayette's Jordy Templet worked seven-plus innings and the homestanding Cajuns staved off a late rally to defeat Middle Tennessee, 5-3, Sunday afternoon at M.L. "Tigue" Moore Field in front of 2,336.

The Cajuns got five runs in the first four innings but could get no more against the Blue Raider bullpen, but Middle Tennessee couldn't push enough runs to win the rubber game of the series, as the Blue Raiders stranded nine in the contest.

The Cajuns got on the board first, as Dallas Morris blasted a solo home run over the leftfield wall with one out in the bottom of the first.

But the Blue Raiders came right back to knot the game, with Josh Archer leading off with a double off the leftfield wall and later scoring on a single from Chuck Akers.

Blue Raider starter Jerry Knox struggled to find the strike zone in the first but got out of the inning without any further damage via an inning-ending doubleplay from Phillip Hawke. But the struggles continued in the second, as Knox allowed a single to Brad Saloom, then walked Ryan Core and hit Kevin Preau to load the bases with one out.

Middle Tennessee head coach Steve Peterson did not wait any longer to go to the bullpen, bringing in Shay Horseman. The freshman got a strikeout of Ray Dees, but Jason Wilson blooped a single over the leaping Jeff Beachum, scoring two runners for a 3-1 Lafayette lead.

The Cajuns added to the lead in the fourth, as Core drew a leadoff walk and scored on a double to leftcenter from Rhett Buras, chasing Horseman from the contest. Buras scored on a single from Preau for a 5-1 Lafayette advantage.

Middle Tennessee cut into the lead in the fifth, as Troy Harp led off with a double down the leftfield



line. Harp went to third on a deep fly ball to center from Cooper and scored on a Marcus Taylor's screamer to the first baseman. Lafayette's Hawke made a diving backhanded stop to get the out and prevent the Blue Raiders from a big inning.

Chris Mobley tossed three shutout innings for the Blue Raiders to keep them in the game, allowing three hits with two walks. Danny Borne came on to start the seventh and allowed a double to Corey Coles and then did not cover the bag on a ground ball to first off the bat of Hawke, putting runners on the corners with nobody out.

Travis Horschel came on to try and get out of the jam, and did just that, getting Saloom to line into a doubleplay and Core to fly out to center, keeping the contest a three-run game.

The Blue Raiders got a run in the eighth and should have gotten more, leaving the bases loaded.

Brett Carroll singled with out one and Chris LeGuenec was hit by the pitch, chasing Templet. The Cajuns brought in leftfielder Coles to pitch, and Archer greeted him with his third hit of the day, a soft single to leftcenter, but Peterson held Carroll at third.

After Shane Kemp's fourth strikeout of the contest, Beachum got his third single of the game, driving home a run and making the deficit two runs. But Akers flied out to center, ending the inning and a golden chance for Middle Tennessee to cut more into the lead.

Saloom made a nice play on a looper in short center off Cooper's bat to get the second out of the ninth, but Taylor singled to give Carroll a chance. The sophomore struck out swinging to end the contest.

Templet (3-3) worked 7.1 innings, allowing three runs on eight hits with seven strikeouts. Coles got his first save of the year, getting the final five outs, giving up three hits and striking out three.

Knox (1-2) allowed three runs on two hits with two walks in 1.2 innings. Horseman struck out three and gave up two runs in 1.2 innings of work. Borne faced just two batters before Horschel came on the get six straight outs, striking out three.

Archer and Beachum had three hits apiece, while Taylor, Beachum and Akers all drove in a run in the loss for the Blue Raiders. Wilson had two RBIs with Saloom and Preau contributing two hits each for the Cajuns.

The Blue Raiders continue their seven-game road swing with a Tuesday contest at Lipscomb at 3 p.m. and a 6:30 p.m. meeting with Austin Peay in Clarksville on Wednesday. Middle Tennessee hosts Florida International next weekend at Reese Smith Field.

GAME NOTES

Josh Archer extended his hitting streak to eight games with a leadoff double in the second ... Chad Cooper had a leadoff single in the third to extend his hitting streak to a team-best 12 games.