

# Brazelton Strikes Out Career High 16 In 5-1 Win Over WKU

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Dewon Brazelton made the first conference baseball game between Middle Tennessee and Western Kentucky since 1982 a memorable one.

Brazelton set two milestones in the Blue Raiders (35-10; 14-8) 5-1 win over the Hilltoppers (29-21; 12-10) - a single-game personal high 16 strikeouts, becoming the school's single-season strikeout king in the process. The Blue Raiders struck first in the contest, plating one run in the top of the third inning against Western Kentucky's ace Ryan Hutchison. Chuck Akers drew a leadoff walk and advanced to third after a stolen base and an errant throw from catcher

Ryan Cattell that sent Akers to third. Kris Lammers did the honors from there with a single into center that easily scored Akers. Western Kentucky answered in the bottom of the inning. Tim Cleland led off with a solo shot over the left field wall that tied the score. That would be the final time that the Hilltoppers would get close to the plate again. Brazelton retired nine of the next 10 hitters he faced with the lone base runner in that span coming on an error. The Blue Raider offense took advantage of Brazelton's dominance to get the lead in the game. The team plated three runs in the top of the sixth. Justin Sims led off the inning with a single and promptly stole second. Brandon Johnson singled to put runners at the corners. Then the WKU wheels fell off. Kyle Thomas hit a sharp grounder back to Hutchison that looked like a sure double play. The throw to second base sailed into center field, scoring Sims and putting Blue Raiders back at first and third. Kyle Skillman singled to drive in Johnson and sent Thomas to third. Lammers then delivered a sacrifice fly to left that brought in Thomas and gave the Blue Raiders a 4-1 advantage. The Blue Raiders added an insurance run in the top of the ninth. Renick drew a leadoff walk and Marshall Nisbett plated him from first with a double that turned out to be the Blue Raiders' lone extra base hit of the contest. Brazelton improved to 11-1 with the win and Hutchison fell to 8-7. Brazelton continued to make his strong bid for Sun Belt Pitcher of the Year. Aside from his 16 K night, Brazelton allowed only three hits and one walk. Skillman led the Blue Raiders offensively with a 2-for-4 night with an RBI and Sims, who extended his season-long hitting streak to 14 games, went 2-for-5. No Hilltopper had

more than one hit. The Blue Raiders and Hilltoppers will conclude their series on Saturday with a rare Sun Belt double-header beginning at 2 PM. The double-header was scheduled due to WKU's graduation on Sunday. Jason Moates is slated to pitch the first game for the Blue Raiders while John Williams will go in game two.

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