FIU Takes Finale, 12-0

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Visiting Florida International pounded out 15 hits and scored five runs in the top of the first to set the tone en route to a 12-0 victory in eight innings over Middle Tennessee Sunday afternoon at a wet and cold Reese Smith Field. The game was called because of the mercy rule.

FIU's Mike Lopez ignited the Panther offense early, singling with one out in the top of the first. Jimmy Bacon and Ricardo Nanita followed with back-to-back doubles to give the visitors a 2-0 lead.

Yahmed Yema then hit a double of his own to score Nanita. After Fernando Alvarez was hit by a pitch, Michael New tripled to right field, clearing the bases and giving FIU a 5-0 lead after just a half inning.

Nanita earned another RBI in the second inning, doubling in Lopez, who had reached on a fielding error.

Yema singled in the third, stole second and advanced to third on a flyout. Yema later scored on a wild pitch, pushing the Panthers ahead 7-0.

FIU (27-10, 6-3 Sun Belt) added to its lead for the third consecutive inning in the fourth. Lopez singled and went to second on a wild pitch. Skipton Adams then doubled home the run for an 8-0 FIU advantage.

From there, the game developed into a pitcher's duel between FIU junior starter Arthur Santos and Middle Tennessee (13-17, 3-6) reliever Chris Mobley.

Santos (1-5) threw all eight innings of the shutout, finishing with a career-high 13 strikeouts and walking just two.

Mobley came on in relief of Blue Raider starter Travis Horschel. Mobley struck out eight and gave up just one run in five innings. Horschel (1-2) gave up seven runs on seven hits in two-plus innings of work.

The Panthers tacked on four more runs in the eighth inning to conclude the scoring. Rivera started the inning with a single to right. Lopez walked and both runners advanced on a wild pitch. Nanita scored Rivera on a foul out and Adams then followed with a single. A throwing error advanced Adams to second and scored Lopez. Yema then tripled to right field for another RBI, and finished the onslaught, scoring on a wild pitch.
Nanita went 3-for-4 with three doubles and four RBIs, while Lopez scored four times for the Panthers.

Nate Jaggers had two of Middle Tennessee's six hits in the contest, as the Blue Raiders made five errors to help the Panthers cause.

The Blue Raiders host Memphis this week at Reese Smith Field, with a 7 p.m. start on Tuesday and 3 p.m. first-pitch on Wednesday. Middle Tennessee travels to Arkansas State next weekend to continue Sun Belt Conference play.

GAME NOTES
Jeff Beachum extended his hitting streak to 10 games with a double in the seventh ... Brett Carroll extended his hitting streak to seven games with a single in the second ... Josh Archer's 12-game hitting streak was snapped after an 0-for-3 day ... Shane Kemp hyperextended his left knee catching a foul out in the eighth.

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