Peterson Gets Win No. 650 in 4-2 Victory

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Chad Cooper had three hits, Brett Carroll scored twice and Travis Horschel worked 3.2 effective innings of relief, as Middle Tennessee scrapped across enough runs to defeat Vanderbilt, 4-2, in front of 1588 at Hawkins Field Tuesday night.

Middle Tennessee jumped out to a 3-1 lead after two innings and the pitching staff worked very well out of the bullpen, as Horschel, John Williams and Chase Swing tossed seven innings, allowing just one to help the Blue Raiders sweep the season series from the Commodores for the first time since 1990. Middle Tennessee provided head coach Steve Peterson his 650th career win as a collegiate head coach, 497 of which have come at the helm of the Blue Raiders.

The Blue Raiders got on the board first for the 29th time this season, as Cooper drew a two-out walk in the first and scored on Josh Archer's double to rightcenter.

Vanderbilt knotted the game in the bottom of the first when leadoff man Ryan Klosterman doubled and went to third on a passed ball. Cesar Nicolas reached on an infield single, plating Klosterman to tie the game at one.

Middle Tennessee regained the lead in the second thanks to some wildness from Vandy starter Blake Owen, who hit Carroll and walked Nate Jaggers and Marcus Taylor to load the bases. Troy Harp grounded into a doubleplay, but Carroll scored, and Jeff Beachum's infield single plated Jaggers for a 3-1 Blue Raider advantage.

Middle Tennessee starter Shay Horseman had the same bit of wildness in the bottom of the inning, as Mickey Kropf singled with one out before Horseman hit both Matt McGraner and Rucker Taylor with breaking balls to load the bases. But the freshman hurler got himself out of the jam, striking out Klosterman and Matt Zeller to end the inning.

Horseman walked the first two batters of the third before being pulled in favor of Horschel, who came on to get a flyout, a groundout and a strikeout to get out of the jam with the Blue Raiders holding the 3-1 lead.

Nicolas and John Kaye both singled to leadoff the fifth. Tony Mansolino moved both runners over with a sacrifice bunt and Warner Jones plated Nicolas with a soft single over Beachum's head into leftfield. Vandy tried the double-steal with two outs, but Kaye was thrown out trying to score the tying run, leaving the Blue Raiders with a one-run lead.

Nicolas led off with a double in the seventh, missing a game-tying homer by about a foot in left-center field. Williams got a strikeout before giving way to Swing. Mansolino reached on an error, the only runner to reach against the sophomore righty, before Jones bounced into a 1-6-3 inning-ending doubleplay.

The Blue Raiders finally added to their lead in the eighth, as Carroll and Jaggers had back-to-back doubles for a 4-2 advantage.

Swing retired the final six batters for his eighth save of the year and seventh save in his last nine appearances, striking out two in 2.2 innings of work.

Horschel (3-2) got the win, allowing just the one run on three hits with four strikeouts. The redshirt sophomore likes facing the Commodores,

as he picked up wins in both games this season, allowing two runs, one earned, on seven hits with five strikeouts

Williams made his second straight relief appearance after 35 consecutive starts, striking out one and allowing one hit in 0.2 innings.

The Blue Raiders take on Arkansas-Little Rock this weekend on the road in the final conference series of the season before heading to the Sun Belt Tournament in Lafayette, La., that begins May 21.

GAME NOTES

The Blue Raiders used their 46th different lineup in 52 games this season ... Josh Archer's double in the first extended his hitting streak to six games ... John Williams made his second straight relief appearance after 35 consecutive starts ... Brett Carroll's double in the eighth extended his hitting streak to six games ... The Blue Raiders swept the season series from the Commodores for the first time since 1990.

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