

Blue Raiders Fall To UT, 11-4

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The Blue Raiders (36-13) squandered a lead against an SEC foe for the second time in as many nights and fell to visiting Tennessee (39-14) 11-4 in front of a record crowd of 2,673.

The Volunteers jumped out to the lead first when Hal Bibee, Jr. drilled a Kris Lammers pitch over the left field wall in the top of the second gave his club a 1-0 advantage. Player of the Year candidate Chris Burke led reached with a two-out double and came in to score on a single from Stevie Daniel to increase Tennessee's lead to 2-0.



Middle Tennessee finally gave the huge crowd a reason to cheer in the bottom of the third. Josh Renick started a barrage of three straight singles with one out that resulted in a run. A popup put Middle Tennessee behind the eight ball with two outs, but a strange play opened the floodgates for the Blue Raiders.

Brandon Johnson hit a ball toward centerfield that Vol centerfielder Justin Parker thought was hit to left. He ranged over toward the gap while the ball landed just a few feet from where he had been standing. The result was a two-run double for Johnson that gave the Blue Raiders a 4-2 lead.

The Vols regained the lead for good in the top of the fifth. Three hits and some textbook baserunning resulted in two Tennessee runs and a 6-4 advantage.

The Blue Raider dam broke in the top of the seventh. The Blue Raiders surrendered six runs on only three hits in the inning, but two errors, a wild pitch with a runner at third, and a bases loaded walk killed the Blue Raiders' chances for a comeback.

The Vols would pick up one more run on a solo homer from Jeff Christensen put the icing on an 11-4 win.

Lammers took the loss for Middle Tennessee and fell to 3-5 on the year while Vol starter Dusty Johnson got the victory to improve to 3-0.

The Blue Raiders limp into the final weekend of Sun Belt play against South Alabama beginning on Friday at 7 PM. The three-game set continues at 2 PM on Saturday and concludes with a 1 PM tilt set for Sunday.

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