Raiders Fall in Series Finale, 8-6

Squad strands 11 runners in the contest

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Kurt Wells hit a grand slam and Brian Hangbers a three-run homer and Adam Gumpf tossed 4.2 scoreless innings of relief in Bowling Green's 8-6 victory over Middle Tennessee in the series finale at Reese Smith Field Sunday. The visiting Falcons (2-1) won the final two games to take the series and send the Blue Raiders (3-5) to their second straight weekend series loss after dropping two of three games to Jacksonville State. Wells hit his grand slam in the second inning to give Bowling Green a 5-4 lead and Hangbers belted a line drive over the rightfield wall in the fourth inning for all of the run support the BGSU pitching staff would need. Gumpf (1-0), the third Falcons pitcher in the game, allowed just two hits, walked one and struck out four in 4.2 innings of work to get the victory. The lefthander kept the Blue Raiders off balance with a good changeup. He gave up both hits in the seventh inning but his defense helped him out, recording a strike-'em-out, throw-'em-out doubleplay to erase the threat. He induced seven fly ball outs on a day when the wind was blowing in, completely opposite from Saturday's game when the wind blew out and the scores soared in a 14-12 BGSU victory. Chris Gacom had two of Bowling Green's nine hits in the contest. BGSU stranded just one runner after the Hangbers home run in the fourth, as Middle Tennessee reliever Brad Robinson was superb, tossing 4.1 scoreless frames, giving up just two hits and striking out four. Blue Raider starter Nick Marrs (0-2) lasted just 3.2 innings, allowing eight runs on seven hits, to take the loss. BGSU starter Marty Baird worked three innings, giving up four runs on seven hits. Middle Tennessee left 11 runners on base, including five in the first five innings in scoring position. Wayne Kendrick collected three of the team's 13 hits,

while Matt Ray had two hits and scored twice. Adam Warren and Ben Darlington both recorded two hits as well. Bowling Green scored first for the third time in the series, plating a run in the first inning. Gacom singled with one out, moved to second on a wild pitch, third on a groundout and scored on Brandon McFarland's single to right. Middle Tennessee scored four times in the first on four hits to take an early lead. Ray drew a leadoff walk to start the inning before a single to right from Kendrick, who moved to second on a wild throw into the infield. Rawley Bishop followed with an RBI single to right and Warren also singled to right, scoring Kendrick. A wild pitch moved both runners up a base before Blake McDade singled home Bishop. A groundout by Justin Jones plated Warren for a 4-1 advantage. But the Falcons came right back with four runs of their own in the second on just two hits. Andrew Foster was hit to leadoff and Mark Galvin followed with a single through the right side. Logan Meisler loaded the bases when he reached on an error before Wells lined a ball just over the leftfield wall for a grand slam and a 5-4 BGSU lead. The Blue Raiders had a chance to score in the bottom of the second after Ray bunted his way on with one out and Kendrick singled down the leftfield line. But Ray was picked off and after a walk to Bishop, Warren flied out to center to end the threat. In the fourth Wells drew a two-out walk and Gacom singled to left before Hangbers hit a hanging breaking ball over the rightfield wall for a three-run homer and an 8-4 Falcons advantage. The home run chased Marrs from the game as well. The Blue Raiders cut into the lead with two runs in the bottom of the inning against Bowling Green's Matt Walters, with Ray leading off with a double. Kendrick then singled to left and Ray later scored on a wild pitch. Warren singled with one out, bringing in Kendrick and making it a two-run game. Gumpf did not allow a runner to reach second base in the four-plus innings of work. Middle Tennessee begins an eight-game road trip Wednesday at Lipscomb at 3 p.m. The Blue Raiders return home on March 13, hosting Southern Illinois.

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