Blue Raiders Split Sunday Doubleheader

Robinson takes no-hitter into sixth inning in victory

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Brad Robinson took a no-hitter into the sixth inning and Blake McDade had three hits and four RBIs, as Middle Tennessee split a doubleheader Sunday against Missouri State at Hammons Field in Springfield, Mo. Robinson, a Murfreesboro, Tenn., native and junior college transfer, retired 15 of the first 17 batters of the game, walking the other two, before pinch-hitter Chris Playter singled to center with one out in the sixth. The righthander kept the shutout by erasing Playter with a doubleheader before running into trouble in the seventh. But McDade and the Blue Raider offense provided Robinson with more than enough offense in Game One of the twinbill, a seven-inning affair that Middle Tennessee won, 7-3. The Blue Raiders (4-8) scored once in the second inning when Rawley Bishop reached on an error to start the frame and moved to third on a McDade double. One batter later Matt Ray scored Bishop with a sacrifice fly for a 1-0 Middle Tennessee lead. In the Blue Raider fourth, McDade singled with one out, stole second and scored on a Justin Jones double down the leftfield line. Middle Tennessee broke open the game with a four-run fifth inning. Doug Birkofer reached on a dropped fly ball by leftfielder Chris Taylor and Wayne Kendrick followed with a single. Adam Warren put down a sacrifice bunt to move the runner over and Bishop drew an intentional walk, loading the bases. McDade then belted his second home run of the season, clearing the bases and providing Robinson with a 6-0 advantage. The Blue Raiders added another run in the seventh when Bishop walked to leadoff. Pinch-runner Matt Campbell moved to second on a wild pitch and scored on a single to rightfield from Zach Hudson. Robinson ran into trouble in the seventh against the Bears,

starting with a one-out walk to Nolan Keane. A double to left from Kyle Paul scored Keane before a single to right by Clay Coulter put runners on the corners. Brayde Drake double to right plated Paul and chased Robinson from the game. Jordan Alvis came on and allowed a sacrifice fly to Taylor before recording the final two outs of the game. Robinson (1-0) allowed three runs on four hits in 6.1 innings of work in his first start of the year, walking three and striking out six to pick up the victory. Alvis walked one and struck out one in two-thirds of an inning. Kendrick had two hits and scored a run and Bishop scored twice for the Blue Raiders, who registered their first-ever win on the road against Missouri State and ended a four-game losing streak overall. Missouri State's Jake Shafer (0-2) gave up five runs, three earned, in 4.1 innings, walking two and striking out five to take the loss. In Game Two, MSU scored five times in the second inning and Tim Clubb allowed just two runs in five innings in a 6-3 Bears victory. The Blue Raiders scored first in the second contest, with Kendrick singling with one out in the first, moving to second on a wild pitch and scoring on a single to the leftside from Adam Warren. But Missouri State (4-4) scored five times on five hits and the aid of one Blue Raider error in the second against lefthander Shay Horseman. Paul reached on an error to start the inning before Drake homered to rightfield. Shane Elenz then tripled and scored on a one-out double to rightcenter from Josh Mazzola. Tann Mattson's single against Tyler Hyde plated Mazzola and a Matt Lawson double with two outs scored the final run of the inning. Middle Tennessee scored once in the third after a leadoff single from Birkofer and a walk to Kendrick. Warren singled down the leftfield line with two outs, scoring Birkofer and cutting the MSU lead to 5-2. The Blue Raiders cut into the lead again with a run in the seventh, as Hyde, Tyler Copeland and Brett Reilley combined to toss five shutout innings of relief, keeping Middle Tennessee in the game. In the seventh Zach Barrett singled to leadoff and Drew Robertson reached on a throwing error by the pitcher after putting down a sacrifice bunt. Barrett moved to third on the play and scored on a balk by Buddy Baumann. Missouri State plated their final run in the eighth, with Keane hitting his second homer of the day, this one against Brandon Brokaw. MSU starter Clubb (1-0) allowed five hits in his first innings of work, walking four and striking out two. Baumann tossed 2.1 innings, giving up an unearned run on two hits with three strikeouts, while Matt Frevert got the final five outs of the game for his first save, including four strikeouts. Horseman (1-1) took the loss, giving up four runs, three earned, on three hits in 1.1 innings. After Hyde worked out of the second inning, the Blue Raider bullpen gave up just the Keane home run in six innings of work, allowing four hits and striking out five. Warren was 3-for-4 with two RBIs in the game, while Birkofer had a pair of hits and scored a run. Middle Tennessee continues its current eight-game road swing with a contest Wednesday at Belmont at 3 p.m. at Greer Stadium. The Blue Raiders open Sun Belt Conference play next weekend, facing defending SBC champion Troy in a three-game series on the road.

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