

Big Innings Spur Raiders to 13-4 Victory

Squad opens conference play with victory at Troy

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Matt Ray was 3-for-4 with two runs scored and three RBI and Justin Jones added three hits and two runs scored, leading Middle Tennessee to a 13-4 victory over Troy Friday night in the Sun Belt Conference opener for both teams at Riddle-Pace Field in Troy, Ala. Adam Warren added three hits and Zach Barrett collected two hits and scored twice for the Blue Raiders (6-8, 1-0 Sun Belt), who ended a four-game losing streak to the Trojans (9-7, 0-1). Middle Tennessee scored four times in the second, only to watch the Trojans tie the contest with a run in the second, two in the third and one more in the fourth. But the Blue Raiders retook the lead with two runs in the fifth, added four runs in the sixth and three more in the seventh to take control of the contest. Blue Raider starter Matt Scott (2-1) worked 5.1



innings to get the win, giving up four runs on seven hits with two strikeouts and a walk. Brett Reilley tossed 2.2 scoreless innings of relief, striking out two. The righthander entered the game in the sixth with one out and two runners on in a 10-4 contest and induced a doubleplay to end the inning. Tyler Hyde worked a scoreless ninth for Middle Tennessee. Troy starter Clegg Snipes (1-2) took the loss, allowing 10 runs on 11 hits in 5.1 innings, walking one and striking out seven. The Blue Raiders scored four times in the second on four hits, but it all started when Blake McDade was hit with one out and moved to second on a balk. Rawley Bishop then singled to right, putting runners on the corners, before Barrett's single to center plated McDade. Jones then doubled to rightfield, plating Bishop, and Ray singled with two outs, scoring Barrett and Jones for a 4-0 Blue Raider lead. Troy got a run back in the bottom of the inning, starting with leadoff singles from Josh Dew and Kevin Weidlich. A Ben Woods groundout

moved the runners to second and third before an RBI groundout from Brett Henry. The Trojans scored twice more in the third. Ian Craze singled with one out before Edgar Ramirez hit a hanging breaking ball over the wall in leftfield, cutting the Middle Tennessee advantage to 4-3. Weidlich then tied the game with a leadoff solo homer in the fourth. But the Blue Raiders regained the lead in the fifth after Ray bunted his way on and moved to second on a throwing error by Troy third baseman Henry. Ray stole third and scored on Wayne Kendrick's single up the middle. McDade reached on a fielder's choice with two outs and then stole second. Troy second baseman Martinez made an error and Kendrick stole home on the play for a 6-4 Middle Tennessee lead. The Blue Raiders added four more runs in the sixth, chasing Snipes from the game in the process. Jones doubled with one out and Drew Robertson followed with an RBI double of his own. Ray then walked before Matt Campbell was hit, loading the bases. With two outs Warren singled home a run and McDade drove home a pair of runs with a single, giving Middle Tennessee a 10-4 advantage. The Raiders added three more runs in the seventh, starting with a Barrett walk. He stole second and moved to third on a Jones single, his third hit of the game. Robertson then doubled down the leftfield line, scoring Barrett, and Ray's sacrifice fly to deep centerfield plated pinch-runner Zach Hudson. Campbell then had a sac fly, plating Robertson for a 13-4 Blue Raiders lead. Middle Tennessee collected 17 hits in the contest after recording 21 hits in a victory over Belmont on Wednesday this week. The two teams continue the series Saturday at 6 p.m., with Middle Tennessee's Brad Robinson facing Troy's Joe Hallahan. The series concludes Sunday at 1 p.m.

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