

Strong pitching leads Blue Raiders to series win

Middle Tennessee takes 2-of-3 from Louisiana-Lafayette

March 18, 2007 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Middle Tennessee started Sun Belt Conference play with consecutive series wins for the first time as a league member by taking the decisive game of a three-game set in a 3-1 win against Louisiana-Lafayette at Reese Smith Field Sunday. It marked the second straight weekend the Blue Raiders (10-11, 4-2) have captured the series by winning the rubber game. Middle Tennessee won its series from Troy in the opening weekend. It also marked just the second time Middle Tennessee has won a regular-season conference series from the Ragin' Cajuns and the first since 2001 - its inaugural season in the SBC. Middle Tennessee equaled its best SBC start by combining Brett Smalley's quality start and sterling bullpen work from Tyler Copeland and Brett Reilley, along with clutch hitting and outstanding



defense. Game 3 of a three-game college baseball series isn't generally known for producing outstanding pitching performances, but Louisiana-Lafayette's Hunter Moody and Middle Tennessee's Smalley engaged in an all-out pitching duel, matching one another pitch for pitch in the early innings. Smalley didn't qualify for the win because he didn't go the necessary five innings; however, he did deliver 4-2/3 excellent innings before giving way to the pen with the bases loaded. Copeland did his job in his one inning but the story became the pitching dynamics of Reilley, who retired all 10 batters he faced in 3-1/3 innings, striking out five in the process. Tyler Dennis and Zach Barrett each had multi-hit games for Middle Tennessee, going 2-for-4. The Blue Raiders have won four of six heading on five-game road swing. Smalley and Moody matched one another pitch for

pitch until Middle Tennessee finally broke through with two runs in the bottom of the fourth. Rawley Bishop came through with a one-out double and was still there when Zach Barrett stepped to the plate and delivered a triple off the wall in left to give the Blue Raiders a 1-0 cushion. The damage was not complete as designated hitter Matt Campbell continued the two-out magic with a double off the centerfield wall to stake the Blue Raiders to a 2-0 lead. The Cajuns (15-5, 4-2) rallied with a run in the fifth and successfully got Smalley out of the game when they loaded the bases with a single and two walks with two outs. Smalley gave way to Tyler Copeland, who walked Jefferies to force in the run. Copeland then got Devery Van De Keere to fly out to center to end the inning and protect the 2-1 Blue Raider lead. Copeland gave way to Reilley with Cajuns on first and third and two out in the sixth. Reilley was able to get Nolan Gisclair to hit into a groundout to short and it would mark the last threat of the game for Louisiana-Lafayette. Not that Reilley needed it, but the Blue Raiders added an insurance run in the seventh when Drew Robertson reached on an error and was sacrificed to second. The game's final run crossed the plate on the Cajuns' second fielding error of the inning. Reilley improved to 3-0 by continuing his strong work out of the bullpen. He worked 3-1/3 innings of no-hit baseball, striking out five and walking none. The Blue Raiders will return to action at Memphis Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Printed on August 1, 2014

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/24845>