

Raiders Swept by FAU

Owls take two games on long day at the ballpark

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

William Block hit a pair of home runs in the first game and Daniel Bombback homered and drove in three runs in the second contest, as Florida Atlantic swept a doubleheader, 16-1 and 8-4, over Middle Tennessee Saturday at Reese Smith Field. The first game was suspended in the bottom of the eighth inning because of rain and completed after the completion of the second game. Florida Atlantic (30-18, 12-14 Sun Belt) pounded out 31 hits in the two contests, with every player in the starting lineup in both contests collecting at least one hit. The Owls hit four home runs in the 16-1 victory, two from Block and one each by Daniel Cook and Mike McKenna.

Bombback's was the only round-tripper in the 8-4 victory, but the biggest reason for FAU's two victories was its starting pitchers. Joel Schmal (4-0) picked up the win in the



first game, tossing seven innings before the rain delay. The lefthander scattered seven hits, allowing one run with no walks and three strikeouts. Chris Eberhart and Andrew Tomlin got the final six outs when the game was resumed, giving up three hits and striking out three. Chris Salberg (4-3) posted the victory in the second game, allowing four runs on 10 hits in 6.1 innings. He did not walk a batter and struck out three. Mike Obradovich picked up his second save of the season with 2.2 scoreless frames, giving up two hits. Zach Barrett was 3-for-4 and had Middle Tennessee's only RBI in the first contest, while Rawley Bishop and Adam Warren each collected two hits. In the second contest the Blue Raiders (24-23, 12-11) recorded 12 hits but managed just four runs, stranding seven runners and hitting into an inning-ending doubleplay in the seventh with two runners on base and FAU leading, 6-4. Matt Ray collected three hits and scored twice, with Wayne Kendrick and Barrett both

recording two hits. In the first contest of the day, Cook hit the second pitch of the game over the wall in leftcenter, his fourth of the season. In the second Block led off with his 13th round-tripper of the year for a 2-0 Owls lead. Florida Atlantic added seven runs on five hits in the fourth. Travis Ozga walked to leadoff and Block followed with a single. Ozga was forced at third on Justin Martin's sacrifice attempt, but a single to left from Billy Degnan loaded the bases. Nick Arata's chopper to third plated Block before a walk to Cook again filled the bags. Bombback's single to right scored two runs, Robbie Widlansky singled home a run and McKenna lined a three-run homer over the wall in leftfield, his 13th of the year for a 9-0 Owls advantage. The visitors scored four more times in the fifth, starting with a leadoff homer to left from Block, his second of the contest. Degnan walked with one out and scored on Arata's double to leftcenter. Bombback's grounder to first was booted by Bishop, allowing Arata to score. Wildlansky singled and McKenna followed with an RBI double for a 13-0 FAU lead. The Blue Raiders finally scored in the sixth after a two-out single from Warren and a run-scoring double by Barrett. The Owls plated three more runs in the eighth before the rains came. Ozga doubled to right with two outs and Block followed with his fourth hit of the contest, a single to center. Riaan Spanjer-Furstenberg then doubled high off the 24-foot wall in center, plating two runs, and Spanjer-Furstenberg scored on an error by Ray for a 16-1 FAU lead. The rains came for almost an hour and the two teams played the second game of the series for television before completing the suspended contest. Brad Robinson (5-2) took the loss in the first game, giving up nine runs on eight hits in four innings of work. He gave up three home runs, walked four and struck out four. In the second game Ozga and Block singled in the second inning before Martin's double down the rightfield line scored both runners. FAU put runners at second and third later in the inning, but Bishop made a diving play toward the line to end the threat. The Blue Raiders got on the board in the bottom of the inning after a leadoff double from Barrett. Grant Box's fly ball to right moved the runner to third before an RBI single to center from Myles Ervin cut the Owls lead in half. Middle Tennessee scored twice in the third after a leadoff single from Ray and a double by Kendrick. Bishop's single to center scored Ray and Barrett's two-out single to right plated Kendrick for a 3-2 lead. But the Owls scored four times in the fourth to retake the lead for good. Martin reached on an infield single and Degnan chopped a single to third. Arata's sacrifice attempt was booted by Alvis, loading the bases with no one out. A groundout by Cook plated Martin before Bombback hit his 12th home run of the year, a three-run shot to leftcenter, for a 6-3 FAU advantage. The Blue Raiders cut into the deficit in the seventh and could have had more. Drew Robertson led off with a single up the middle and Ray followed with a double down the leftfield line. Robertson slipped rounding third and was tagged out trying to get back to the bag for the first out. Matt Campbell followed with an RBI single to center, ending the day for Salberg. Kendrick blooped a single into short center against Obradovich, but Bishop bounced into an inning-ending 6-4-3 doubleplay with the Owls holding a 6-4 lead. FAU plated two insurance runs in the eighth when Arata led off with a single, moved to second on a sacrifice by Cook, went to third on a fielder's choice from Bombback and scored on Justin Ferreira's single to right. Bombback later scored on a sacrifice fly by McKenna for the 8-4 final score. Jordan Alvis (1-1) suffered the loss for Middle Tennessee in his first career start. Alvis allowed six runs, five earned, on 10 hits in five innings of work. The two teams will finish the series Sunday at 12:30 p.m. Note the slightly earlier starting time to accommodate Florida Atlantic's flight Sunday afternoon. Sunday is also Little League Day, with all players participating in a parade around the field before the game. All players wanting to be in the parade must be at Reese Smith Field behind the rightfield wall by 12:15 p.m. Everyone will be able to keep all foul balls on Sunday as well, as they are sponsored by Agee's Sporting Goods.

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