Scott Superb in Blue Raider Victory

Senior tosses six shutout innings; Kendrick, Warren, Box each record three hits

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Matt Scott tossed six shutout innings, giving up just five hits, and Wayne Kendrick, Adam Warren and Grant Box each collected three hits, leading Middle Tennessee to a 12-7 victory over Florida Atlantic Sunday at Reese Smith Field. The Blue Raiders salvaged the final game of the series after the Owls won both ends of a doubleheader on Saturday. With the win on Sunday, Middle Tennessee (25-23, 13-11) kept pace in a crowded race in the middle of the Sun Belt standings. With Louisiana-Lafayette and Louisiana-Monroe still playing Sunday afternoon, the Blue Raiders are tied for fourth with Troy with six games left in conference play. Middle Tennessee won 2-of-3 from the Trojans the first weekend of the year. Scott (4-4) had his best outing of the season after almost not being on the weekend roster because of an injury. The righthander walked one and struck out four in six innings of work, allowing all singles. He retired eight of the first nine batters of the game before giving up a two-out single in the third inning to Daniel Cook. Kendrick and Warren both homered in the first inning to give the Blue Raiders an early lead. Warren scored three times in the contest, collecting a double as well, while Kendrick drove in three runs. Box had three hits and two RBIs and Drew Robertson also drove in two runs. Middle Tennessee led 10-0 after five innings before Florida Atlantic scored six times in the seventh to make the game close. The Blue Raiders added two

insurance runs in the eighth and Brett Smalley got the final seven outs of the contest, giving up just one run on two hits. FAU starter Brandon Kloess (2-1) took the loss, allowing seven runs on six hits in 3.1 innings. The Blue Raiders finally got off to a good start in the series, scoring three times in the first to take an early lead. Matt Campbell drew a one-out walk before Kendrick hit a two-run homer to leftcenter, his fourth of the season. Two batters later Warren belted his sixth round-tripper of the year, a solo shot to leftcenter, for a 3-0 home team advantage after an inning of play. The Owls (30-18, 12-15) had their best chance to score in the fourth when Robbie Widlansky and Mike McKenna both singled to leadoff. Widlansky moved to third on a fly ball to right from William Block, but Travis Ozga bounced into an inning-ending 4-3 doubleplay to end the threat. Middle Tennessee added five runs on seven hits in the fourth to stretch the lead. Warren led off with a double, followed by an RBI single from Blake McDade. After a stolen base, Zach Barrett's single to center plated McDade before another single, this one from Box, put runners on the corners. Robertson's fielder's choice scored Barrett and ended the day for Kloess after 3.1 innings. The righthander walked three and struck out two. Matt Ray walked against reliever Alex Pepe and successive two-out singles to right from Kendrick and Rawley Bishop both plated runs for an 8-0 Blue Raider advantage. The Blue Raiders scored twice more in the fifth after a leadoff walk to Barrett and a single from Box. Robertson's sacrifice bunt moved the runners to second and third. FAU was going to intentionally walk Ray, but Lou Morey's first pitch went all the way to the backstop, allowing Barrett to score. Ray's double down the rightfield line plated Box for a 10-0 Middle Tennessee lead. Florida Atlantic roughed up reliever Brett Reilley in the seventh to make it a close game. Pinch-hitter Riaan Spanjer-Furstenburg was hit to leadoff and Justin Martin followed with a single. A double to leftcenter from Tyler Stevens plated pinch-runner Billy Dedman and Cook's single to center scored two runs. Widlansky singled with two outs to plate Cook before McKenna drove his 14th homer of the year over the wall in leftfield, cutting the Middle Tennessee lead to 10-6 and ending the day for Reilley. Smalley threw one pitch to get the final out of the inning. In the Blue Raider eighth, Warren walked to leadoff and moved to second on a sacrifice bunt by Zach Hudson. Barrett was intentionally walked before Box blooped an RBI single into short leftcenter. Robertson followed with a bouncer past a drawn-in infield, scoring Barrett for a 12-6 lead. Widlansky hit a mammoth blast with two outs in the ninth, his 11th of the season, but it was too little too late for the Owls. Middle Tennessee hosts Lipscomb Wednesday at 6 p.m. at Reese Smith Field in the final non-conference game of the season for the Blue Raiders.

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