Raiders Take First Game, 6-2

Robinson pitches well; Box, McDade, Bishop all hit homers in victory

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MIAMI, Fla. - Brad Robinson allowed one earned and gave up just four hits and Middle Tennessee hit three home runs in a 6-2 victory over Florida International Friday night at University Park. Grant Box and Blake McDade both hit solo homers and Rawley Bishop added a two-run shot, providing all of the offense the Blue Raiders needed to post their third consecutive victory overall and fifth in the last seven meetings against FIU in Miami. Matt Ray, Wayne Kendrick and McDade all collected two hits in an 11-hit attack for Middle Tennessee (27-23, 14-11 Sun Belt). Florida International (25-25, 11-13) managed just five hits in the contest, two from Bryan Pullin, and the Golden Panthers stranded eight runners, including two each in the sixth and seventh innings. Robinson (6-2) worked 5.2 innings before giving way to the bullpen. The righthander gave up two runs, one earned, walked two and struck out four to pick up just his second win in a month. Nick Marrs got the final out of the sixth and the first two outs of the seventh before running into trouble with a pair of walks. Josh Anderson came on to toss the final 2.1 innings for his first save of the season and just the second of his career. Anderson gave up just one hit and struck out the Sun Belt's leading hitter, James McOwen, to end the threat in the seventh. FIU's James Allen (4-5) went the distance, striking out 11 but giving up six runs on 11 hits. Allen did not walk a batter but hit two. "We played some outstanding defense, made some very good plays," head coach Steve Peterson said. "We got some long hits. [Allen] got stronger as the game went on, but he left a couple

of pitches up and we hit them well. "We had some big clutch hits and the pitching did the job. Robinson located his fastball better and pitched well and the bullpen finished the game." Box gave the Blue Raiders an early lead, lining a solo homer over the wall in rightfield, his fifth of the season and second in the last two games. Middle Tennessee added three more runs in the fourth, starting with a solo blast with one out to right from McDade, his sixth round-tripper of the year. Matt Campbell and Drew Robertson both singled with two outs before Ray chopped an RBI single up the middle, plating Campbell. Robertson later scored on a wild pitch for a 4-0 Blue Raider lead. Robinson was flawless through five innings before running into trouble in the sixth. Chris Dunn doubled off the wall in deep leftcenter to leadoff and Corey Lozano followed with a walk on a very close pitch on ball four. Robinson looked like he might get out of the jam, getting fly balls from McOwen and Luis Bautista, but Pullin blooped a single into short center with two outs, plating Dunn. The righthander then hit Tyler Townsend to load the bases and end his day. Lozano scored later in the inning on a passed ball, cutting the Middle Tennessee lead to 4-2, but Bishop made a nice play toward the line at first to end the inning without any further damage. FIU had another chance to score again and possibly tie the contest in the seventh inning after a pair of two-out walks, but McOwen struck out looking against Anderson to end the inning. The Blue Raiders added two insurance runs in the eighth when Kendrick led off with a single and Bishop lined his 14th home run of the season over the leftfield wall, staking Middle Tennessee to a 6-2 advantage. The two teams continue the series Saturday at Noon CT, with Middle Tennessee sending senior Matt Scott (4-4, 4.58 ERA) to the mound. **GAME NOTES**
Zach Barrett extended his hitting streak to nine games with a single in the first inning ... Rawley Bishop extended his hitting streak to six games with a two-run homer in the eighth ... Adam Warren had his six game hitting streak come to an end after an 0-for-4 effort, including three strikeouts. It was just the third three-strikeout contest of Warren's career.

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