

Raiders Drop 2-0 Decision

WKU evens series, finale set for Saturday on Senior Day

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Matt Ridings and Matt Scott both tossed complete games, but Western Kentucky got solo home runs from Scotty Colt and Matt Hightower en route to a 2-0 victory over Middle Tennessee Friday night at Reese Smith Field. The Hilltoppers (24-28, 14-15 Sun Belt) evened the three-game series with the victory and probably secured a spot in next week's SBC

Championships with the win. Ridings (7-2) allowed just four hits, walking four and striking out seven in his third complete



game of the season. Colt led off the WKU fifth with his fourth homer of season, a towering shot to left on an inside fastball. Hightower hit a mistake over the middle of the plate for his fifth round-tripper of the year in the sixth for the final run of the contest. Adam Warren had two of the Blue Raiders four hits in the contest, while Wayne Kendrick and Zach Barrett accounted for the team's other two hits. Ridings walked four in the game, but induced a pair of doubleplay balls to kill Middle Tennessee (29-25, 16-13) rallies in the fourth and seventh innings. Scott (5-5) tossed the first complete game of the year for the Blue Raiders and the first complete game for the staff since Scott went the route against New Mexico State in the 2005 Sun Belt Championships in Miami, Fla. The righthander gave up the two home runs and seven hits altogether. He struck out five and did not walk a batter. Western Kentucky's Scott Kaskie hit the first pitch of the game off Scott up the middle for a single, but the Blue Raider righthander retired 11 of the next 12 batters he faced. Barrett singled for Middle Tennessee in the second and Ridings got himself into trouble in the third, hitting Myles Ervin and walking Matt Ray and Kendrick. But the home team was unable to capitalize, as Blake McDade grounded into a fielder's choice and Rawley Bishop struck out to end the inning. Warren singled with one out in the Middle Tennessee fourth, but was erased when Grant Box bounced into a 6-4-3 doubleplay. Colt's towering drive over the wall in leftfield to leadoff the fifth broke up the scoreless contest. Hightower's line drove to rightfield gave the Hilltoppers a 2-0 advantage in the next inning. Warren led off with a single in the Blue Raider seventh and Box hit a grounder to the left side, but Colt made a diving stop and got the out at second. Ervin then lined sharply into a 6-4-3 twin-killing to end the inning. Middle Tennessee had another chance in the eighth after Ray walked with one out. A hard grounder right to the first baseman from Blake McDade moved Ray to second and Kendrick followed with a single to right, but Ray was held at third. Bishop then flied out to deep center,

stranding the two runners with WKU holding onto a 2-0 lead. Ridings worked a perfect ninth and tossed 133 pitches in the contest. The two teams play the rubber game of the series Saturday at 2 p.m., with Middle Tennessee sending sophomore Jordan Alvis (1-1, 4.70) to the mound. Senior activities will begin at 1:30 p.m. and Blue Raider baseball alumni will also be recognized before the contest.

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