

Carroll, Eakes Power 10-2 Victory

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Brett Carroll homered twice and drove in four runs while Chase Eakes doubled, tripled and had three RBIs, as Middle Tennessee jumped out to an early lead and never looked back, defeating Belmont, 10-2, Wednesday afternoon at Greer Stadium.

Middle Tennessee scored twice in the first and second and four more times in the fifth, opening an 8-0 lead, more than enough for Blue Raider starter Eric Blevins, who worked 6.1 solid innings in his first career start.

The Blue Raiders (9-2) have now won five games in a row. The squad did that twice last season, both in the month of May en route to an NCAA Tournament appearance. Middle Tennessee has also won five straight on the road, their first five-game winning streak since taking five in a row from April 11-18, 2001.

The Blue Raiders got off to a great start at the plate, as Eric McNamee led off the game with a single and Carroll hit a towering drive over the message board in leftfield for a 2-0 lead.

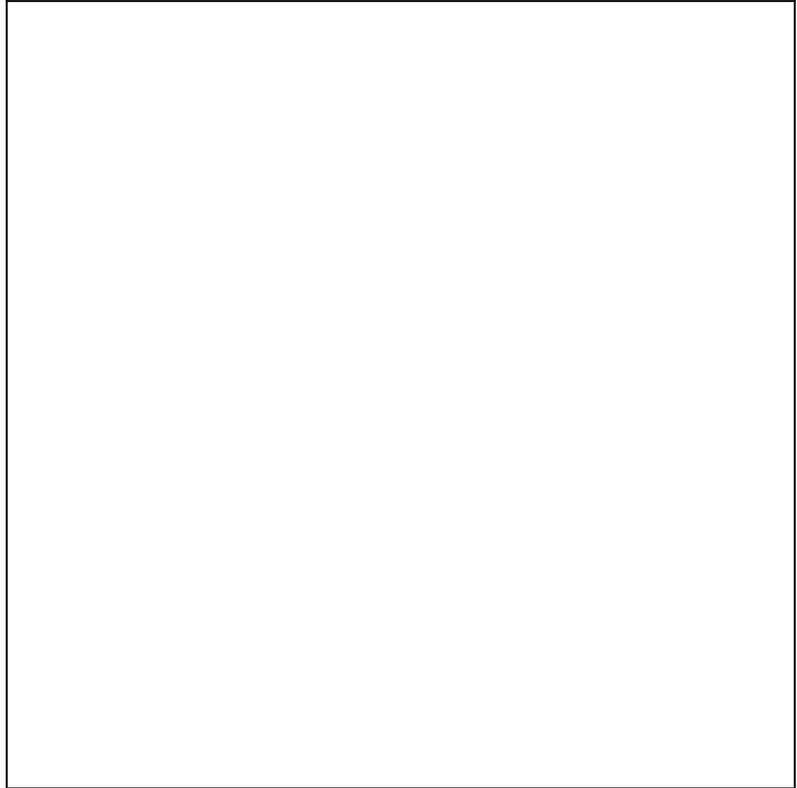
In the second Eakes led off with a 400-foot plus double, the ball hitting halfway up on the batter's eye in centerfield. Two batters later a single down the leftfield line by Troy Harp plated Eakes. McNamee gave Middle Tennessee a 4-0 edge with a two-out single up the middle, plating Harp.

The Blue Raiders expanded the lead with a four-run fifth, chasing Belmont starter Ryan Herzberg in the process.

McNamee and Jeff Beachum singled to start and Shane Kemp followed with a walk, loading the bases. The Bruins went to the bullpen, but reliever Brandon Paetznick walked Carroll to force in a run. Two batters later Eakes belted a bases-clearing triple into rightcenter for an 8-0 advantage.

Carroll added his second homer of the game in the seventh, reaching out and lifting one that hit the top of the message board in leftfield for a 9-0 Blue Raider lead.

Blevins (1-0) worked 6.1 innings, allowing two runs on eight hits with three strikeouts and one walk.



Matt Scott came in with two on and one out in the seventh and got a doubleplay to end the threat after the Bruins pushed across two runs earlier in the frame.

Belmont (12-4) scored twice in the seventh on three hits and a hit batter, getting an RBI sacrifice fly from pinch-hitter Stephen Sundstrom and an RBI infield single by Brad Dobner.

Scott worked 1.2 scoreless innings, perhaps his most impressive outing this year. Danny Borne for the final three outs, as the Blue Raiders posted a 6-2 mark on their eight-game road swing.

Herzberg (1-2) suffered the loss for Belmont, allowing seven runs on seven hits in four-plus innings of work.

Middle Tennessee returns home this weekend to face 2003 College World Series participant Southwest Missouri State in a three-game series starting Friday at Reese Smith Field.

GAME NOTES

Junior Eric Blevins made his fourth appearance of the season and his first career start ... Junior Eric McNamee singled to leadoff the game, extending his streak of reaching base this season to 11 games. The Columbia State CC transfer has scored a run in every game this season as well ... Junior Brett Carroll blasted a two-run homer in the first to extend his hitting streak to eight games. Carroll homered twice in the game, the third two-homer game of his career and first since belting two round-trippers against Missouri in the Starkville Regional last year ... Senior Shane Kemp waited until his last at-bat to extend his hitting streak to seven games, blasting a solo homer, his third of the season ... The Blue Raiders have won five games in a row. The squad did that twice last season, both in the month of May. Middle Tennessee has also won five straight on the road, their first five-game winning streak since taking five in a row from April 11-18, 2001.

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