Taylor's Homer, Blevins' Arm Lead 10-0 Victory

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. - Marcus Taylor's three-run homer highlighted a six-run third inning, and Eric Blevins tossed six shutout innings, as Middle Tennessee defeated Samford, 10-0, and swept a two-game series from the Bulldogs at Griffin Field.

The Blue Raiders (13-3) used two big innings to post their ninth win in 10 games and head home to open a five-game homestand. Middle Tennessee had five guys with two hits apiece, pounding out 14 hits in the game and 27 in the two-game series.

Robert Toline started the six-run third inning with a single through the leftside. Michael McKenry and Eric McNamee followed with singles in almost the same spot, loading the bases for Jeff Beachum, who blooped an RBI single into short rightcenter.

Shane Kemp then doubled to leftcenter, plating two runs for a 3-0 lead. Two batters later Taylor lined one through the breeze and over the wall in rightfield for his third three-RBI game of the year and a 6-0 Blue Raider advantage.

Middle Tennessee added four runs in the fourth on three hits. McNamee and Beachum both singled to leadoff, with McNamee scoring on a throwing error. Josh Archer drove in a run with a single to right in the inning. Toline was hit with the bases loaded later in the inning, plating Brett Carroll, before Archer scored on a balk.

Blevins struggled through the first two innings but settled down, giving up just three hits and striking out a season-high five. The junior righthander did not walk anyone and allowed just one hit after the first inning.

Jeff Kasser, Danny Borne and Chase Swing each pitched one inning of scoreless relief for the Blue Raiders, who posted their fourth shutout as a team this season.

McNamee, Beachum, Archer, Toline and McKenry all had two hits in the contest, with McNamee and Kemp each scoring twice.

Samford (3-13) starter Joe Denson (0-1) took the loss, giving up six runs on seven hits in 2.1 innings.

Middle Tennessee begins a five-game homestand Friday against Dayton at 3 p.m. at Reese Smith Field. The Blue Raiders play against UD at 2 p.m. Saturday and 1 p.m. Sunday.

GAME NOTES

Today's win marked the seventh straight road victory for the Blue Raiders, which is the most consecutive wins away from home since the Blue Raiders had seven in 2001 ... Redshirt freshman Robert Toline drew his first career start as a Blue Raider, getting the starting nod in leftfield ... Sophomore Marcus Taylor returned to the lineup, starting in rightfield. Taylor missed six games because of injury ... Junior Nate Jaggers got his sixth start of the year, serving as the designated hitter ... Jeff Beachum's single in the third extended his hitting streak to six games.

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