Cajuns Win 6-5 in 14 Innings

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Leonard Guerrero singled home the game-winning run in the 14th to give Louisiana-Lafayette a 6-5 Sun Belt Conference victory over Middle Tennessee Friday night at Reese Smith Field in the longest game for the Blue Raiders since 1985. The two teams played a back-and-forth contest that saw five lead changes and a pair of game-tying home runs by Middle Tennessee's Shane Kemp. The contest was the longest for the Blue Raiders since a 14-inning outing versus Kentucky on May 2, 1985. In the 14th for the visiting Ragin' Cajuns, Dallas Morris led off with a single before a sacrifice bunt by Rhett Buras was booted by Middle Tennessee pitcher Eric Blevins. After another sac bunt and an intentional walk, Guerrero delivered the single to left to score Morris, but a relay from Kemp to Brett Carroll to Troy Harp nailed Buras at the plate. Craig Schambough (4-1) picked up the win with six innings of relief, allowing one run on five hits. Blevins (2-1) suffered the loss, giving up two runs, one earned, on three hits. The two teams used eight pitchers in the contest, five for the Blue Raiders, with the clubs combining for 27 hits and 24 left on base. The Ragin' Cajuns (17-8, 3-1 SBC) scored first in the contest with a single run in the third. Kevin Preau doubled with one out before Justin Merendino reached on a throwing error. After an infield single from Morris, Phillip Hawke walked to force in a run for a 1-0 UL lead. Troy Harp had the only good scoring chance for the Blue Raiders in the first five innings, a high fly ball that was knocked down by the wind and caught on the wall in leftfield by UL's Jason Rodriguez. Middle Tennessee (16-10, 1-3) took the lead in the sixth with four hits, starting with a one-out double to rightcenter by Chuck Akers. A two-out single to left from Carroll plated Akers to tie the game at one. Consecutive singles from Derek Phillips and Kemp scored Carroll for a 2-1 Blue Raider advantage. But the Ragin' Cajuns knocked two Middle Tennessee pitchers out of the game, literally, in the eighth to regain the lead. UL's Josh Landry led off the inning with a single off the thigh of starter Chris Mobley, knocking the junior righthander from the contest. After a walk by Chase Swing, Danny Borne entered the game for the Blue Raiders, only to walk pinch-hitter Brad Saloom before hitting Justin Bourque, forcing in a run. A sac fly by Ryan Core made it 3-2 Cajuns before a single from Rodriguez grazed Borne's hand, sending him to the dugout as well and scoring Saloom for a 4-2 UL

lead. Things seemed bleak for the Blue Raiders against UL reliever Patrick Green, who mowed down the side in the eighth. But Green ran into trouble quickly in the ninth, hitting Phillips with an 0-2 pitch before Kemp jumped all over the first offering from Green and parked it over the wall in leftfield, tying the game at four. The Blue Raiders had a chance to win the game later in the ninth against Schambough, loading the bases with another hit batter, a single from Josh Archer and an intentional walk to Eric McNamee. But Akers and Jeff Beachum both grounded into fielder's choices to end the inning and the threat, sending the game into extra innings, the first extra-inning outing this season for both clubs. Neither team could muster a scoring threat until UL's Guerrero led off the 13th with a double. A sacrifice bunt moved Guerrero to third before Merendino battled through an 11-pitch at-bat before hitting a soft-liner to second where McNamee booted the ball, allowing Guerrero to score the go-ahead run. But Kemp again was the hero for the Blue Raiders, hitting the first pitch deep over the wall in leftfield, tying the game at five. But it was not enough, as the Blue Raiders lost for the seventh time in nine outings and fell to 1-3 in Sun Belt Conference play. Kemp tied his career high with four RBIs and had the first two-homer game of his career, collecting three hits in the contest. McNamee, Akers and Phillips all had a pair of hits for Middle Tennessee. Mobley struck out 10 in seven-plus innings of work, allowing two runs, one earned, on six hits with four walks. UL starter Kevin Ardoin went seven innings, giving up two runs on eight hits with one walk and four strikeouts. Both starters deserved better than the outcome, a no decision. Game two of the series is Saturday at 2 p.m. The Blue Raiders will send John Williams (4-1, 2.22 ERA) to face Ian Pecoraro (0-1, 4.70). Game three is set for Sunday at 1 p.m. **GAME NOTES**

Sophomore Jeff Beachum hit third in the lineup for the first time in his career ... Junior Eric McNamee extended his hitting streak to three with a single in the third. McNamee has hit safely in 21 of the 26 games this season ... Chuck Akers had two hits in the contest, his second two-hit game of the year and the first since the season-opener ... Junior Brett Carroll extended his hitting streak to three games with a single in the sixth ... Senior Shane Kemp extended his hitting streak to three games with a single in the sixth ... Junior Chris Mobley's 10 strikeouts are his most versus a Sun Belt Conference opponent, besting his nine punchouts versus South Alabama at the 2002 SBC Championships ... The game went extra innings, the first such contest for the Blue Raiders this season ... The outing for Travis Horschel, 3.2 innings, was his longest of the year and longest since also tossing 3.2 at Vanderbilt (5/13/03) ... Troy Harp has hit safely in eight of his last nine games with his single in the 11th ... Kemp had the first two-homer game of his career and tied his career-high with four RBIs.

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