Church's Arm, Big Inning Spark 9-6 Victory

April 4, 2004 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee scored eight runs in the first inning and hung on for a 9-6 victory over Louisiana-Lafayette Sunday to salvage the final game of the series Sunday at Reese Smith Field. Middle Tennessee (17-11, 2-4 SBC) stopped a three-game conference losing streak and hopefully gained a measure of confidence heading into this week's four road games. Sophomore BJ Church (1-0) made his first start of the season and shut down the visitors for five-plus innings, allowing three runs on three hits with 10 strikeouts in 5.2 innings. Junior Steve Kline, who has been the Sunday starter this season until this week, came on to get his second career save with 3.1 innings of work, giving up one run on two hits with three strikeouts. The Blue Raiders chased UL starter Josh Kohrs (3-1) in the first inning, scoring eight times in the frame on six hits and two walks. The game remained 8-0 until UL (18-9, 4-2) scored five times in the sixth and once more in the seventh and looked like they might come all the way back and sweep the series. But Kline got out of a jam in the seventh with a groundout and a flyout to end the threat and retired six of the last seven batters of the game. In the first for Middle Tennessee, Eric McNamee led off with a single and Chuck Akers followed with a walk. After a sacrifice bunt, Shane Kemp walk before three straight singles from Brett Carroll, Nate Jaggers and Jeff Beachum. Michael McKenry then blasted his second grand slam of the season to chase Kohrs. Later in the frame, Chase Eakes walked and scored on a two-out single from Akers for Middle Tennessee's third eight-run inning of the year. Things were quiet until UL struck for five runs in the sixth on four hits and the aid of one Blue Raider error. Church struck out Brad Saloom to start the inning, but Saloom reached on a wild pitch. Josh Landry then doubled before Church looked like he might work out of the jam with a pair of strikeouts. But Justin Bourque singled through the leftside, plating both runners and chasing Church from the game. Blue Raider Chase Swing entered but was ineffective, walking Leonard Guerrero and giving up back-to-back doubles to Ryan Core and Micah Cockrell, cutting the Middle Tennessee lead to 9-5. Kline

came on to get the final out of the inning. In the seventh Saloom and Landry both singled to start, with Saloom scoring on a fielder's choice by Bourque. Kline walked a batter in the eighth, but the Cajuns could not muster another comeback. Six Middle Tennessee players had two hits apiece, including McNamee, Akers, Carroll, Jaggers, Beachum and McNamee. McNamee scored twice for his 18th multi-run outing of the year. Kohrs allowed seven runs on five hits with two walks in 0.1 innings. Brandt Sanders and Jered Salazar did more than commendable work in relief for the Cajuns, giving up two runs on eight hits in 7.2 innings with four strikeouts. Middle Tennessee embarks on a four-game road swing starting Wednesday with a 6:30 p.m. tilt against former OVC foe Austin Peay. **GAME NOTES**

Sophomore BJ Church made his first start of the year. It was his first career home start against a Sun Belt opponent and just the third conference start of his career ... Junior Eric McNamee extended his hitting streak to five games with a leadoff single ... Junior Brett Carroll extended his hitting streak to five games with a single in the first ... Junior Steve Kline made his first relief appearance since the 2001 season, his freshman year. His last relief outing came May 26, 2001, versus Wake Forest in the NCAA Knoxville Regional. His only other career save came April 15, 2001, at Arkansas-Little Rock ... The eight-run inning in the first was the third eight-run inning for the Blue Raiders this season. The last one was in the eighth inning on March 6 in the first game of a doubleheader at Southeastern Louisiana.

Printed on December 12, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/2908