Raiders Strand Chances in 6-1 Loss

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee stranded a season-high 17 runners, including leaving the bases loaded four times, dropping a 6-1 decision to Vanderbilt Wednesday night at Hawkins Field. The Blue Raiders (34-18) had scoring chances in all but one inning and had at least two runners on in the final five innings of play, but were unable to capitalize on a dozen Vandy walks. Middle Tennessee had only six hits in the contest and had just one inning, the fifth, with multiple hits. Vanderbilt (36-16) took advantage of two Blue Raider errors to get early runs and never looked back. VU starter Tyler Rhoden (2-0), the first of seven Commodores hurlers, got the victory, walking one in two innings. The final five Vandy hurlers each walked two batters, but combined to strand 15 runners. Middle Tennessee starter Shay Horseman (1-3) suffered the loss in his first appearance since April 28. Horseman allowed two earned runs on five hits in 3.2 innings with one strikeout. VU's Ryan Klosterman was the hitting star in the contest, going 3-for-5 with three runs scored. He had a single, double and triple, and scored after all three hits, crossing the plate in the third, fifth and eighth. Vandy's Antoan Richardson started the scoring, reaching on an error in the first and moving to second on the play. He scored on a soft single into leftcenter from Warner Jones for a 1-0 Commodores lead after an inning. Klosterman doubled to leadoff the third and scored on a groundout from Jones. Consecutive singles to start the fourth by Mike Baxter and Aaron Garza set up another run for Vanderbilt, with Baxter scoring on Worth Scott's groundout for a 3-0 VU lead. The Blue Raiders cut into the lead in the fourth when Derek Phillips reached on an error to start the inning. Shane Kemp's single down the leftfield line, plated the run, but Brett Carroll was thrown out trying to move to third on the play. Jones drove in his third run of the game with a single to right in the fifth, scoring Klosterman. Cesar Nicolas plated Richardson later in the frame with a bloop single into rightcenter for a 5-1 advantage. Middle Tennessee continued to get opportunities, especially in the late innings, but were unable to get the timely hit. Carroll flied out to left to end the fifth, Eric McNamee lined out to right to finish the sixth, Jeff Beachum flied out to center to end the seventh and Michael McKenry fouled out to third to finish the contest. Chuck Akers drew a career-high four walks in the contest, while Kemp had a pair of free passes and two of the team's six hits. He was

also robbed of at least a double by Richardson in the second. Middle Tennessee finishes the home schedule this weekend with a three-game series against Arkansas-Little Rock, starting Friday at 7 p.m. at Reese Smith Field. **GAME NOTES**

Blue Raider starting pitcher Shay Horseman made his first appearance since April 28 at Memphis ... Senior Chuck Akers played in his 225th career game, tops on the career list. The centerfielder also drew four walks in the contest, a career-high. He now has 99 career free passes, good for sixth on the all-time list, passing Phillip Edwards (1989-92) ... Junior Eric McNamee drew his 43rd walk of the season, moving into a tie for sixth with Ryan Cheshire (1977) on the single-season list ... The loss snapped a season-high seven-game winning streak for Middle Tennessee ... The Blue Raiders stranded a season-high 17 runners in the contest, surpassing the previous high of 15 (2/28, at Jacksonville State).

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