Bulldogs Batter Raiders, 16-2

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ATHENS, Ga. - Middle Tennessee baseball players were loose, relaxed and confident they could make some noise entering the NCAA Regional at Athens, Ga. Friday, even if they had to open against No. 10-ranked Georgia on its home field.

Things started OK for the Blue Raiders in the first, but them came the second inning.

The Bulldogs exploded for nine runs in the second inning to chase Blue Raider starter Chris Mobley and Middle Tennessee (40-21) could never recover on their way to a 16-2 whipping at Foley Field. It was the sixth consective loss in NCAA Regional action for Middle Tennessee.

"It was just a bad day for us and a great day for Georgia," Middle Tennessee coach Steve Peterson said. "I did not see this coming. Right now there is no thought process of winning the tournament, just winning a game. We are in a national setting right here. It's no embarrassment to get beat, especially to get beat by Georgia. I think the embarrassing part is we didn't do the game justice and that's what bothers me more than anything. We just didn't play the game very good."

Mobley (7-5) had the shortest stint of his three-year career, lasting just 1-1/3 innings. He surrendered four hits and seven runs, all earned before being lifted in favor of Danny Borne.

"I couldn't find the strike zone with my fastball," Mobley said. "I gave them opportunities to get good pitches to hit. Anytime I got behind and left a ball up to hit, they took advantage of it and that's what good teams do. It's very disappointing because I expected better, we all expected better."

Georgia (39-20) had scored just one run in its previous 30 innings entering Friday's game, but the Bulldogs got nine runs on six hits in the second inning. UGA added five more runs in the fourth and single runs in the seventh and eighth.

The Blue Raiders managed just four hits and did not get their first hit until the fourth inning. They stranded just five runners in the contest. Middle Tennessee scored single runs in the seventh and

ninth, but it was far too little, too late. Junior third baseman Brett Carroll belted his 14th home run in the ninth.

UGA starter Sean Ruthven worked three hitless innings before giving way to Johnny Dobbs (4-2), who got the win with three innings of one-hit ball. Three other Bulldog hurlers tossed the final three innings.

Middle Tennessee got on the board in the seventh with a pair of hits. Nate Jaggers singled up the middle before Brett Carroll was hit. Jeff Beachum then singled back through the middle, scoring Jaggers.

The Blue Raiders play in the loser's bracket Saturday at 11 a.m. ET against the loser of Friday's late game between Clemson and Birmingham Southern.

"I still believe we can win and have success, but we have to play our game," Middle Tennessee catcher Troy Harp said. "We played about as poorly as you can today but this is something we have to put behind us."

GAME NOTES

Middle Tennessee is playing in its 13th NCAA regional and fourth in the last five years. The program has had only one other such run in the postseason, participating in four of five tournament once before (1987-88, 1990-91) ... Starter Chris Mobley lasted just 1.1 innings, his shortest outing of the season and shortest since going 3.1 innings at New Mexico State (3/26) in the Sun Belt opener. It was also the shortest outing of his career. The seven runs allowed ties for the most earned runs allowed in his career ... Reliever Danny Borne allowed seven runs in 2.2 innings, the most in his career ... Sophomore Jeff Beachum singled in the seventh, extending his hitting streak to seven games ... Junior Eric McNamee drew a walk in the eighth, his 50th of the season, adding to his single-season record ... Middle Tennessee allowed nine runs in the second inning, the most in one inning this season by an opposing team. The previous high was seven, done twice in 2004 (3/22 vs. Troy State, 5/29 vs. Western Kentucky) ... The loss in the contest is the worst in a first round game in NCAA play in school history and the worst since an 18-6 defeat in the first game of the 1990 regional in Palo Alto, Calif. (San Diego State, 5/24/90).

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