Blue Raiders Lose 17-11 in 14 Innings

Blue Raiders tie game in bottom of 9th on freshman's pinch hit three-run shot

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee came back from a seven-run deficit in the bottom of the ninth to tie the game at 11 but could pull ahead as Memphis took a 17-11 win in 14 innings. Trailing 11-4 in the bottom of the ninth, sophomore Ben Darlington stepped to the plate in the with one out and runners at first and second and hit a shot to left field cutting the Tigers (16-25) lead to four. Then junior Zach Dean had a pinch hit single allowing freshman Bryce Brentz to score from third and cut the lead to one. Freshman Justin Jones tied the game at 11 for the Blue Raiders (21-18-1) with his pinch hit three-run home run to left field. The Blue Raiders ended the bottom of the ninth scoring seven runs on six hits. Wiedman had a two-RBI single in the top of the 14th with no outs to break the tie and take a 13-11 lead. Farrell then doubled scoring runners from second and third to take a four run lead. Memphis ended the top of the 14th scoring six runs on five hits for the win 17-11. Middle Tennessee posted 16 hits with two errors leaving 16 on base in the 5 hour and 22 minute game, its longest of the season. Jones ended the game 1 for 1 with three RBI and his second career home run to force extra innings for the Blue Raiders. "I can't tell you how much I appreciate Justin Jones and Ben Darlington's efforts. The easiest thing to do is pack it up and quit in that circumstance but there are reasons why things happen. Justin and Ben are hurting because we didn't win the ballgame but we had other opportunities to put it away but just kind of ran out of the big hits," head coach Steve Peterson said. At the plate, the Blue Raiders were led by Brentz and senior Zach Barrett who were each 3 for 5 with one RBI. Brentz also scored a run. Junior Rawley Bishop ended the night 2 for 4 with two RBI, a home run and scored one run. Middle Tennessee used eight pitchers in the game with senior Brad

Robinson (2-5) taking the loss as he allowed six runs on five hits in one and two-thirds innings of work. Freshman PJ Francescon received the start going two and two-thirds innings allowing five runs on five hits. Freshman Michael Adamson and sophomore Tyler Hyde each pitch three and two-thirds with Adamson allowing just one hit and Hyde two runs on one hit. "I just didn't want Adamson to throw anymore. He had thrown enough pitches and the ball started to go up on him. I had one pitcher left and if we had tied it again I would have had to recycle Alvis and I didn't want to do that," Peterson said. "We have to put it behind us now and we will because we totally understand how we have to play. This isn't early season by any means." Graham singled to bring in the first runs of the game for the Tigers who took a 2-0 lead with two outs in the first. Memphis ended the inning with the bases loaded but not before scoring two runs on three hits. The Blue Raiders responded in the bottom of the inning cutting the lead to one as Brentz hit a sacrifice fly to right field allowing Hines to score from third. Barrett tied the game for Middle Tennessee with his single up the middle allowing Burnett to score from third. With the bases loaded, two outs in the top of the third Francescon walked Chalmers which allowed Graham to walk in from third. Then Zurcher singled bringing in two runs and giving the Tigers a three-run lead. Memphis scored three runs on one hit in the inning with four walks to take a 5-3 lead. Bishop put the Blue Raiders within one as he hit a two-run shot with one out in the fifth. Neither team would score until Shelton hit a two run single to left field with two outs. Then Weidman doubled adding two more runs for the Tigers. Weidman scored from third on a wild pitch by Doss. Memphis would take a 10-4 lead scoring five runs on four hits. In the top of the ninth, Memphis added another run as Farrell scored on a wild pitch after a single to reach. The Blue Raiders will be back in action April 25-27 when it plays host to South Alabama for a three-game series at Reese Smith Field. First pitch on Friday is set for 6 p.m.

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