Ninth Inning Home Run Just Short in 4-3 Loss

Bishop has big late hit in loss to Bulldogs

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WINCHESTER, Tenn. - Junior Rawley Bishop hit a solo home run in the bottom of the ninth to put the Blue Raiders within one but it was not enough as Mississippi State took a 4-3 win on Wednesday night. Bishop and freshman Bryce Brentz were the only Blue Raiders (26-22-1) to post double digit hits on the night as each went 2 for 5 with one run scored. Freshman PJ Francescon (1-3) had the longest outing of his career as he allowed three runs on five hits with four strikeouts in six innings of work. Junior Brett Smalley pitched two and two-thirds innings in relief allowing one run on two hits while junior Kevin Whittaker struck out the only batter he faced. As a team, Middle Tennessee notched seven hits with one double and one home run, both hit by Bishop, but left 11 runners on base. The Bulldogs (20-29) also had seven hits on the night with one double and two home runs but left only six runners on base as Michael Busby (1-4) took the win with his one and one-third innings of work allowing just one hit. Mississippi State took an early 3-0 lead in the first on two-home runs to left field. The first home run was good for two as the runner at first reached on an error by Miller. Neither team would score until the bottom of the fourth when the Blue Raiders cut the lead to two on a sacrifice fly to right field by Miller with the bases loaded allowing Brentz to score. Then McDade received a base on balls with the bases loaded cutting the lead to one as Box came in from third. Mississippi State added an insurance run in the top of the ninth as Flagg, who walked, scored from second on a double to right field. Middle Tennessee played its sixth

game in as many days and posted a 4-2 record during the stretch. Middle Tennessee will wrap-up its long run when it travels to Springfield, Mo., to face Missouri State in a three-game series May 9-11.

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