

February 20, 2009

Blue Raiders crush Bears 19-4 Brentz picks up win; Bishop, Miller, Brentz hit homers

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee began the 2009 season with a 19-4 win over Missouri State on opening day in the newly renovated Reese Smith Jr. Field in front of a crowd of 1,252.

Sophomore **Bryce Brentz** did not miss a beat picking up right where he left off in 2008 this time taking the mound. Brentz took the win on the hill working five innings allowing just one run on two hits with one strikeout.

"It starts with Bryce. He was a little over 80 pitches and I wanted to keep him at 80. As the fifth inning started, I thought I was going to have to pull him out and he had a decent lead. He knows the game. He went in there with about 65 pitches and he knew I just wasn't going to leave him out there," head coach Steve Peterson said. "He then started to buckle down, hit the strike zone a little more and got through that last inning."

Middle Tennessee had two big innings at the plate, the fourth and the eighth. The Blue Raiders scored seven runs on six hits with three errors by Missouri State to take an 8-1 lead in the fourth.

"They are a quality program and it is hard to say who is good and who is bad on Feb. 20. All I asked of my team was to be prepared and to give themselves a chance to win on Feb. 20," head coach Steve Peterson said.


In the inning, sophomore **Justin Miller** hit a triple and then scored on a double by freshman Justin Guidry. Miller, in his 19th career start, ended the game 2 for 4 with two RBI, a triple, home run and scored three runs.

"Miller's home run tied the game up. Justin has really been swinging the bat well and the last intersquad game really drove the ball well. I don't want to be around him and I don't want to talk to him. When hitters are doing well I don't want to do anything to mess them up, it's like when you have a no-hitter you don't want to say anything and mess it up," Peterson said.

When junior **Tyler Hyde** came into the game in relief in the sixth inning, Brentz moved to the designated hitter position where he hit a three-run home run in the eighth inning which saw the Blue Raiders score 10 runs on seven hits.

Senior **Rawley Bishop** had a good day at the plate as he was 3 for 5 with a home run, five RBI and scored three runs while McDade added assistance with his three hits, four RBI



Sophomore Bryce Brentz took the win on the mound opening day working five innings allowing just one run on two hits with one strikeout. (B. Lambert) 

and scoring three runs. Middle Tennessee had 18 hits on the night while Missouri State had seven but the two squads combined for seven errors.

"We got some big hits. We got a big hit out of Justin Guidry, **Blake McDade** and really all through the lineup. They had a bad infield tonight, a bad pop-up and that kind of opened the floodgates. I was worried we were going to do the same thing. We played better so we were the better playing team today but Missouri State is a good team and they will be fine," Peterson said.

Middle Tennessee had nine extra-base hits which included two doubles by Guidry, and three home runs.

Missouri State's Tim Clubb, who has received three Preseason All-America nods, worked four innings allowing eight runs on seven hits. It was the first loss for Clubb, who was 11-0 in 2008, since April 22, 2007.

The last time Middle Tennessee scored more than 10 runs was in a 20-5 win over Mississippi State on May 6, 2008.

The Blue Raiders will be back in action on Saturday, Feb. 21 at 2 p.m. in game two of its three-game series with the Bears. Live stats and live audio will be available for the entire series on goblueraiders.com.

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