

Scott, Eakes Lead Blue Raiders in Win

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Matt Scott provided the pitching and Chase Eakes was a one-man wrecking crew at the plate as Middle Tennessee (1-1) evened its three-game series against Ball State with an 11-2 win in front of 489 at Reese Smith Field Saturday afternoon.

Scott, the sophomore right-hander from nearby La Vergne, made his first start as a Blue Raider one he will remember by pitching six solid innings of three-hit baseball to earn the win. Working on a pitch count, Scott needed just 84 pitches to get through six innings. He struck out four, walked one and surrendered just one earned run to collect his fourth career win.

While Scott was dealing on the mound, Eakes was dominating at the plate. The junior designated hitter had a career day with his first three-hit performance. Eakes was 3-for-4 with a home run, three RBIs and two runs scored to lead a 13-hit attack. Jeff Beachum (2-for-5, double, one run, two RBIs), Nate Jagers (2-for-4, two runs scored, RBI), and Eric McNamee (2-for-5, run scored, RBI) also had multi-hit games for the Blue Raiders.

The Blue Raiders used a little two-out magic to get on the board in the second inning. Nate Jagers started the frame with a single and, with two outs, moved to second when Josh Archer walked. Chase Eakes followed with a clutch two-out hit and Jagers just beat the throw home to stake Middle Tennessee to a 1-0 lead.

With the help of a Blue Raider error and a hit batsman, the Cardinals (1-1) quickly answered with two runs to grab their first lead at 2-1.

Middle Tennessee bounced back when they put up a five spot in the bottom of the fifth. Eakes started the uprising when he collected a one-out single and advanced to third on a perfectly



executed hit-and-run by Eric McNamee, who drilled the ball through the vacated hole between first and second. Freshman outfielder Nathan Hines coaxed a walk to load the bases and then junior shortstop Jeff Beachum collected his second hit of the day when he laced a double over the left fielder's head to plate two runs and stake the Blue Raiders to a 3-2 cushion.

The hit parade continued when Marcus Taylor ripped a double off the wall in right center to send Beachum and Hines plateward and give Middle Tennessee a 5-2 advantage. Jagers extended the lead to 6-2 with his second hit of the day, a sharp single inside the bag at third to score Taylor; however, Jagers was thrown out at second trying to stretch the hit into a hustle double.

Eakes continued his outstanding day at the plate in the bottom of the sixth when he belted a two-run home run to left center to put the Blue Raiders on top 8-2. Middle Tennessee added three more runs in the bottom of the seventh to go on top 11-2.

The two teams will play the third and final game of the series on Sunday at Reese Smith Field. First pitch is scheduled for 1 PM.

NOTES:

Former La Vergne High School standout Matt Scott, the Alexander Automotive Player of the Game, made his first collegiate start on the mound today for the Blue Raiders ... The MT baseball program held its annual "Baseball Reunion" this weekend and among those in attendance on Saturday were Bryan Peck, Jeff Parsons, Wes Whitehead, Kevin Davis, Steven Kines, Derek Phillips, John Williams, Shane Kemp, Ryan Darnell, Kyle Thomas, Ty Curley, Jason Moates, Tjerk Smeets, Aaron Barnett, Bill Martin, Doug Birkofer, Bobby Hines, John Stanford, George Zimmerman, Philip Campbell and Adam Sauer ... Matt Scott's bid for a no-hitter ended in the fourth inning when Ball State's Mike Sullivan singled to left field ... The Blue Raiders recorded their first double play of the season in the third inning ... Nate Jagers recorded his 49th career multi-hit game today with two hits against the Cardinals ... Todd Martin recorded his first hit as a Blue Raider today in the sixth inning when he ripped a shot inside the first base bag ... Jeff Beachum recorded his 42nd career multi-hit game and Chase Eakes registered his fourth ... Junior Chase Eakes blasted his second career home run with a shot over the left field wall in the sixth inning ... Eakes finished with three RBI to equal his career-best ... Pitcher Aaron Wallus, a senior transfer, made his first Blue Raider appearance today when he entered in the seventh inning and promptly struck out the side. Wallus finished with five strikeouts and earned his first save ... True freshman Adam Darby made his first collegiate appearance when he pitched in the seventh inning and recorded a single that squirted between third and short ... Every starter in the Blue Raider offensive lineup reached base against the Cardinals on Saturday ... The number nine-spot in the Blue Raider order went a combined 5-for-8 with three home runs and five RBIs in the two games.

QUOTES

P Matt Scott: "My mindset for this start actually began (on Friday). I was on the chart and just taking notes on every hitter where I thought I was going to throw them. I reviewed that pretty extensively and worked off of that the whole game. That fourth inning was pretty tough. I made a few bad pitches and they capitalized on them, but luckily I got out of there with only the two runs scoring and that is because we turned the double play with the bases loaded."

DH Chase Eakes: "We kind of struggled on Friday as did I. We just wanted to come out here today

and get some good innings out of Scott, swing the bats better as a team, and I think we did that today. I really like hitting off of lefties, he left some up and I saw some fast balls. I am just glad to get the opportunity."

Head Coach Steve Peterson on today's game: "I thought Matt Scott did a very nice job. He got in some trouble there in the fourth inning but he battled through it. We were able to finally get a big inning going in the sixth and put on some more runs. Until that point, it was anybody's game, but Matt really threw well. Wallus came in and once he started getting comfortable, he struck out five in three innings and really closed the door on them. I really thought Ball State played well again today so it was a good way to even the series going into the rubber game on Sunday."

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