Blue Raiders pick up third SBC sweep

MT defeats UALR 11-7 in final game

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LITTLE ROCK, Ark. - Middle Tennessee swept its second consecutive conference series with an 11-7 win over Arkansas-Little Rock in the second game of a doubleheader on Sunday afternoon. The Blue Raiders picked up their third Sun Belt sweep of the season improving to 20-4 overall and 11-1 in league play. "It was a long day but was well worth it. To have a three-game sweep is good and very difficult to do as we saw in the ninth inning today," head coach Steve Peterson said. "We have gotten through four league series and next week we will be halfway through after UL-Lafayette next weekend and will look at the Sun Belt race then." This is the 11th straight SBC win for Middle Tennessee who has not lost a conference game since losing the opening game 4-3 to New Orleans on March 6. It is also the first time since May 2004 that the Blue Raiders have won 10 or more straight conference games. Freshman Justin Guidry took the win as he worked four innings giving up two hits while striking out seven of the 15 batters he faced. Guidry also retired nine straight at one point in the outing. "Guidry did a wonderful job for us in the fourth through the eighth innings," Peterson said. Sophomore Jud Stoltz received the start on the mound working four innings allowing five runs on two hits with six strikeouts. Senior Rawley Bishop, junior Ben Darlington and sophomore Bryce Brentz led the Blue Raiders at the plate as each went 3 for 5. Bishop had a double and a home run while Brentz had two home runs, a double and four RBI. "Brentz had an outstanding day and Bishop performed well too. It is good to see Rawley making good contact with the ball," Peterson said. "If we could get the whole line-up getting good quality at bats it would be good. We are so hot and cold throughout the line-up at times and obviously UALR's pitchers did a good job in those situations today." The Blue Raiders had 14 hits on the day with six extra base hits as the pitching staff held UALR to four hits on the day with two of those being

doubles. Brentz hit a solo shot to left field to give the Blue Raiders a 1-0 lead to begin the game. UALR tied the game in the bottom of the first on a double to right by Tyson Parks. The Trojans added another run on a fielder's choice and then a double steal allowed Parks to score from third. UALR took a 3-1 lead scoring three runs on one hit in the inning. Middle Tennessee responded quickly in the top of the second scoring two runs, one on a single by Hines and the other on a fielder's choice to the shortstop, to tie the game at 3. Robertson singled to right field bringing in one run and then Brentz doubled to left center adding two more runs as the Blue Raiders took a three run lead. The Blue Raiders scored five runs on four hits to go ahead 6-3. Emmons double to short centerfield in the fourth with the bases loaded bringing in two runs and cutting the Blue Raider lead to one, 6-5. Brentz and Bishop each hit home runs in the top of the fifth to extend the Blue Raider lead to three runs. Middle Tennessee made it 9-5 after a sacrifice fly to left field by Burnett scored Meinhart from third. Middle Tennessee added an insurance run in the top of the ninth as Hines scored from third on a single by Darlington. Then Bishop scored from third on a wild pitch extending the lead to six runs. UALR added two runs in the bottom of the ninth on sacrifice flies to cut the Blue Raider lead to four. Middle Tennessee will be back in action on April 1 when it travels to Clarksville, Tenn., to face Austin Peay at 6 p.m. The game with APSU will be broadcast on the internet only through goblueraiders.com.

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