

Blue Raiders Suffer Third Straight Loss In 6-3 Setback At SMS

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SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - Middle Tennessee squandered a 3-0 lead in the bottom of the sixth and suffered a 6-3 setback to Southwest Missouri in front of 1,131 at Hammons Field Saturday afternoon. The Blue Raiders (8-8) broke a scoreless deadlock in the top of the fourth when Nathan Hines delivered a two-out double into the gap in right centerfield to plate Chase Eakes, who had singled. Middle Tennessee built its lead to 3-0 in the top of the sixth with more two-out magic. Eakes singled with two outs and advanced to second when Adam Warren struck out, but reached on a wild pitch to

continue the inning. Hines stepped to the plate with two outs and worked the count to 3-2 before fouling off three straight pitches. Hines coaxed a walk and the pitch got all the way to the screen on the fourth ball, allowing Eakes to score and give Middle Tennessee a 2-0 lead. Warren advanced to second on Hines' walk, went to third on a wild pitch and scored on another wild pitch to give the Blue Raiders a 3-0 lead. Sophomore righty Matt Scott was cruising going into the bottom of the sixth, but he hit Matt Weglarz leading off the inning. Tim Rafferty followed with a double and Jerrod White delivered a three-run home run to tie the game at 3-3 and chase Scott. "Matt mowed them down in the fifth and was pitching well but it fell apart in the sixth and the game was tied before I could get the bullpen ready," Middle Tennessee coach Steve Peterson said. "It became a battle of the bullpens and their pen was better than ours today." SMS (6-11) tacked on two more run in the seventh off relief pitcher Josh Anderson (1-2) and then added an insurance run in the eighth against Chase Swing to take the 6-3 win. Middle Tennessee managed just four hits in the game with Eakes going 2-for-4 with two runs scored. Hines added the double and Warren beat out a bunt single to account for the Blue Raider offense. The Blue Raiders will conclude the three-game series against SMS Sunday at 1 p.m. Eric Blevins is the scheduled starter for Middle Tennessee. **NOTES:** Middle Tennessee has lost three straight for the first time this season ... Matt Scott stretched his streak of consecutive innings without allowing a run to 14 before allowing three in the sixth ... The first five hitters in the Blue Raider lineup were a combined 0-for-20 ... Middle Tennessee fell to 0-9 all-time against SMS in

Springfield, Mo., with the loss.

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