

# Big Inning Pushes Raiders to 14-4 Win

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## **MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -**

Middle Tennessee scored nine runs in the sixth inning to break open a one-run game and defeat Tennessee Tech, 14-4, Tuesday night at Reese Smith Field in the first of a home-and-home between the two teams. The Blue Raiders (10-11) won for the 10th straight time in the series at home and improved to 6-5 this season at Reese Smith Field. Middle Tennessee took a 5-1 edge into the top of the sixth, but let the visiting Eagles plate three runs with the aid of two errors to make it a one-run contest. But the home team came right back in the bottom of the frame to get nine runs

on six hits and a pair of TTU miscues. Blue Raider starter Tyler Copeland (3-1) breezed through five innings before running into trouble in the sixth, some by his own doing and some from errors by his teammates. Copeland gave up four runs, one earned, in 5.2 innings, on five hits with a career-high six strikeouts. The Blue Raiders took advantage of some wildness from TTU (6-17) starter Billy Welsh in the first, with Eric McNamee and Nate Jagers drawing walks and Todd Martin singling in the middle to load the bases. Michael McKenry's two-run single to leftcenter gave the Blue Raiders a 2-0 lead, but Welsh induced an inning-ending doubleplay to get out of the jam without further damage. Middle Tennessee added to the lead in the second after Nathan Hines doubled to lead off. A single through the left side from McNamee plated Hines for a 3-0 lead. Tech cut into the lead in the fifth with a solo homer to right from Nathan Marty, his fourth of the season. In the bottom of the inning Jagers led off with a double and went to third on a wild pitch. After a walk to Marcus Taylor, reliever Adam Cloar's pickoff throw sailed high, allowing Jagers to score. Taylor went all the way to third on the play and scored on McKenry's single through the leftside for a 5-1 advantage. The Eagles capitalized on two Blue Raider mistakes to cut the deficit to one in the sixth. Copeland gave up a leadoff walk, but got the next two batters. Scott Dunham then bunted his way on to put runners on the corners before Jeff Beachum booted a grounder to extend the inning and allow Brandon Bornstein to score. Marty then flipped a single down the rightfield line to plate another run before a throwing error on Jagers allowed the third run of the inning to score. But the Blue Raiders broke open the game with nine runs in the bottom of the frame on six hits. Josh Archer started the rally with a single to center, followed by a walk to McNamee and a single from Martin to load the bases. A

walk to Jagers forced in a run before Taylor's two-run single to right. McKenry singled on the leftside to load the bases again and Beachum's grounder down the third base line was knocked down by a diving Clint Alexander. His throw to the plate hit the runner in the back, allowing two runs to score. Hines plated two more runs with a single to leftcenter. Another run scored on an error and the final run came home on a passed ball - nine runs in all on six hits and two errors. McKenry was 3-for-3 with three RBIs and a run scored, while Martin, Hines and Archer all had a pair of hits.

Jagers scored three times and walked twice, as the Blue Raiders pounded out 15 hits in the game, their 13th contest this season with double-digit hits. Chase Swing tossed 2.1 scoreless innings and Jimmy Kelly got the final three outs for Middle Tennessee. The two teams play the back end of the home-and-home series Wednesday at 7 p.m. in Cookeville. **GAME NOTES**

Todd Martin singled in the first before striking out in the second, ending a streak of hits in seven straight official at-bats dating to the series at Arkansas-Little Rock ... Nathan Marty's homer in the fifth was the first allowed by Blue Raider hurler Tyler Copeland this season and in his career ... Jeff Beachum's error in the sixth ended a stretch of 20.2 innings of errorless play from the Blue Raider defense, dating to last Tuesday's game at Lipscomb ... Copeland struck out a career-high six batters in the game.

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