Blue Raiders fall 5-4 to Cajuns

Will face Florida Atlantic at 9 a.m. Friday morning

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TROY, Ala. - Middle Tennessee could not overcome UL-Lafayette's pitching and defense as the Ragin' Cajuns took a 5-4 win on Thursday night. The Blue Raiders had two late inning rallies scoring three runs in the eighth and ninth but could not close it out as UL-Lafayette got the final out on a fielder's choice by the shortstop. "The shortstop made a heck of a play. His feet slipped out from under him and he was still able to make a great throw. They made two outstanding plays at the end of the game," head coach Steve Peterson said. Justin Robichaux picked up the win as he worked seven innings allowing just one run on nine hits with three strikeouts as he got assistance from the defense who pulled four double plays. Blake Haagen and Luke Wagley worked the final two innings of relief allowing three runs on four hits to seal the win for the Cajuns. "Justin Robichaux pitched an outstanding game making some big pitches in key situations. He identified hitters and the side of the plate where he knew he could get them. They got the clutch hits and we didn't. We also probably walked five or six guys and hit a couple other batters," Peterson said. Middle Tennessee sophomores Bryce Brentz and Tyler Burnett and senior Nathan Hines each had three hits on the night to guide the team at the plate. Brentz had a double and scored two runs while Burnett notched a double of his own. The Blue Raiders had 13 hits on the night with three doubles and have yet to hit a home run in the tournament. Freshman Justin Guidry took the loss as he worked 4.1 innings allowing four runs on three hits in his first collegiate start on the mound. Middle Tennessee's bullpen performed well as four pitchers closed out the game allowing only one run on four hits. "Justin Guidry

did alright, nothing great, but he lost his concentration and his cool. He tried to make a big play and didn't get his feet set and then lost command of his strike zone. Overall I was hoping to get him to the fourth or fifth so he did alright," Peterson said. "The bullpen did alright. We just didn't execute all the way through and gave up five runs. We are a good hitting ballclub and Lafayette is a good pitching ballclub and they showed it tonight." The Ragin' Cajuns got on the board early as Smith hit a solo shot to right field on the first pitch he saw in the game. Then UL-Lafayette added another run in the third to increase its lead to two runs. Middle Tennessee got on the board after a double down the left field line by McDade scored Brentz from first in the fourth inning, 2-1 ULL. Hawkins singled in the fifth driving in a run and then with the bases loaded Fontenot hit a foul ball to right field caught by Meinhart to bring in another run and make the score 4-1 in favor of the Ragin' Cajuns. UL-Lafayette added another run in the seventh after a double to centerfield scored a runner from second. Brentz notched his third hit of the game after doubling to centerfield to bring in Hines from third to cut the UL-Lafayette lead to three, 5-2. Hines singled to reach and then got to third after two wild pitches by Haagen. Then with the bases loaded Robertson received a base on balls to bring in another run and cut the lead to two. Middle Tennessee scored two runs on three hits making the score 5-3. Middle Tennessee added another run in the ninth on a deep sacrifice fly to center by McDade cutting the lead to one, 5-4. Middle Tennessee will play Florida Atlantic in an elimination game at 9 a.m. on Friday, May 22. The game will be broadcast on goblueraiders.com and 88.3 FM in Murfreesboro, Tenn., with Dick Palmer calling the play-by-play.

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