

Raiders Defeat WKU, 7-5

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BOWLING GREEN, Ky. -

Adam Warren had two hits and drove in two runs and Allan Woodward got the final three outs, saving the game for Matt Scott, as Middle Tennessee defeated Western Kentucky, 7-5, Friday night at Nick Denes Field.

The Blue Raiders (15-14, 3-3 Sun Belt) jumped out to a 4-0 lead after a half inning, but watched the homestanding Hilltoppers (11-22, 2-8) cut the deficit to one. Both teams added runs in the middle innings before Middle Tennessee scored two insurance runs in the eighth, the first on a two-out double

from Eric McNamee to give the visitors their third straight regular season victory over WKU.

Scott (5-1) allowed five runs on 10 hits in 6.2 innings, striking out five and hitting three batters. Tyler Wetherington worked into the ninth before Woodward got the final three outs for his first save of the year and the first for the Blue Raiders since March 8 at Memphis.

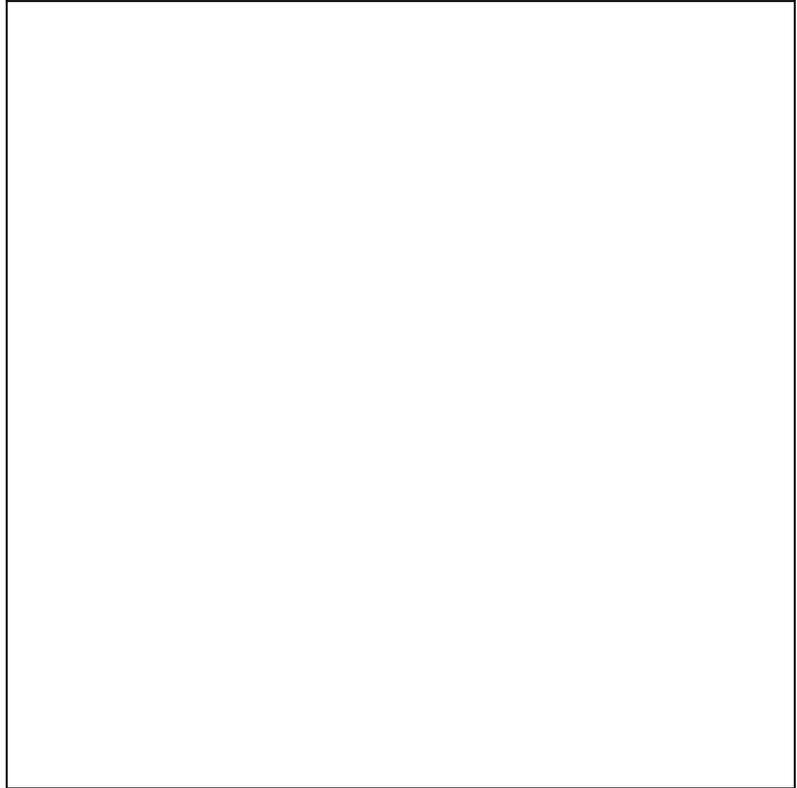
WKU starter Daniel Faulkner (4-5) worked into the eighth, giving up six runs on 11 hits with six strikeouts.

McNamee's double in the eighth plated Marcus Taylor, and a flair to single from Nathan Hines followed to score McNamee and give the Blue Raiders a 7-4 lead in the eighth.

Middle Tennessee would need all the run it could get because the Hilltoppers loaded the bases with one out in the bottom of the ninth on a double from Marcus Ross, a walk and a single by Ben Cooper. Eric Scriven singled to left to cut the deficit to two, but Woodward got a strikeout of Conteze Armstrong before inducing a slow-roller to the right side by Matt Ransdell for the final out.

Warren had an RBI single in the first and a run-scoring double in the fifth, while McNamee and Todd Martin scored twice in the victory.

The Blue Raiders got off to a great start, using five hits and a walk to score four runs in the top of the first.



McNamee drew a leadoff walk, went to second on a wild pitch, moved to third on a groundout by Hines, and scored on a single to center from Nate Jagers. The Blue Raiders had three more hits in a row, singles by Martin, Warren and Jeff Beachum, scoring runs on the last two. Alex Watson's two-out single to left plated the final run of the inning for an early 4-0 lead.

The Hilltoppers got two runs in the bottom of the second, starting when Ross was hit to leadoff. Antone Towns drew a one-out walk before a one-out double down the leftfield line from Ben Cooper plated a run. A bunt down the first base line by Scriven allowed Towns to score and cut the deficit to 4-2.

WKU added another run in the third, loading the bases with singles from Ransdell, Tim Grogan and Ross. Casey Hamilton's fielder's choice plated Ransdell, cutting the Blue Raider lead to one.

Middle Tennessee added a single run in the fifth on consecutive doubles from Martin and Warren for a 5-3 advantage.

Jordan Newton's leadoff double in the seventh turned into a three-base hit after Marcus Taylor bobbled the ball playing it off the wall. Ross plated the run with a sacrifice fly, and a hard single and line out chased Scott from the contest.

Wetherington came on and hit a batter before getting Scriven to line out to centerfield to end the inning with the Blue Raiders still holding a 5-4 lead.

The Blue Raiders added two big insurance runs in the eighth, with Taylor leading off with a single. McNamee then drilled the first pitch from reliever Miles Ormon to deep left centerfield and off the glove of Armstrong, allowing Taylor to come all the way around to score. Hines then blooped a single into short center, plating McNamee for a 7-4 lead.

Ransdell, Ross, Hamilton and Cooper all had two hits for the Hilltoppers, with Scriven driving in a pair.

The two teams continue the series Saturday at 2 p.m. and conclude the three-game set Sunday at 1 p.m.

GAME NOTES

The two head coaches in the game - Steve Peterson for Middle Tennessee and Joel Murrie for Western Kentucky - had met 53 times previously as either the head coach or assistant coach at their respective schools, with Murrie holding a 28-25 edge heading into Friday's contest ... Nate Jagers extended his hitting streak to a career-high 13 games with a single in the first. The streak is the longest since Derek Phillips and Brett Carroll both hit in 13 straight last season ... Todd Martin extended his hitting streak to five games with a single in the first ... Adam Warren extended his hitting streak to six with a single in the first ... Eric McNamee extended his hitting streak to seven games with a double in the eighth ... Marcus Taylor had two hits in the game, his first multi-hit game since March 25 at Arkansas-Little Rock, a stretch of nine games ... McNamee scored two runs in the game, the 29th multi-run game of his career and eighth this season. It also marks the third straight game with two runs scored for the senior ... Warren had two hits in the game, his fifth multi-hit contest in the last six outings.

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