

Throwing Error Gives Blue Raiders 8-7 Victory

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - A throwing error by Chris South allowed two runs to score in the bottom of the ninth, giving Middle Tennessee an 8-7 victory over Memphis in a seesaw affair Tuesday night at Reese Smith Field. The Blue Raiders (17-15) got a leadoff walk in the bottom of the ninth from Chase Eakes, and pinch-hitter Wayne Kendrick followed with a perfect bunt, reaching with a single. Nathan Hines, who failed to get a sacrifice bunt attempt down in the seventh inning, put down another good bunt, with Smith fielding on the third base side of the field. Hines was hustling down the line and was going

to beat the throw, but Smith's bullet to the bag sailed wide and deep down the line, giving both runners time to score for the come-from-behind win. The Tigers (9-25) had taken the lead in the eighth, loading the bases on a single from John Peterson, a botched bunt single by Cory Barton and a walk. A fielder's choice and a walk retired two batters, but Adam Amar's double down the rightfield line plated two runs for a 7-6 UM advantage. Middle Tennessee also had a chance to add to the lead or tie the game in three innings, but Memphis leftfielder capped off a great night by throwing out three runners at the plate. Martin added three hits, three runs scored and a solo homer in a losing effort. The Blue Raiders pounded out 18 hits, while the two teams combined for 31 hits but 25 stranded runners, including a dozen by the home team. Todd Martin led Middle Tennessee with three hits, while Nate Jagers, Doug Birkofer, Jeff Beachum, Chase Eakes and Hines all added two hits. Amar also had three hits for the Tigers and added three RBIs. Allan Woodward (2-1), the fifth Middle Tennessee pitcher of the night, picked up the win with two innings of relief. South (2-2) took the loss, allowing the two unearned runs in 1.1 innings of work. The Tigers scored twice in the first thanks to a pair of hits, starting with a single from Jordan Tolliver. Martin's single moved Tolliver to third, with Martin going to second on the throw. The first run scored on a sacrifice fly from Amar and the second on a wild pitch. Middle Tennessee plated a run in the bottom of the inning on a solo home run from Jagers, his eighth of the season. The Blue Raiders took the lead in the second after back-to-back singles from Eakes and Josh Archer. Hines then blasted his second homer of the year, a three-run shot over the trees in rightfield for a 4-2 lead, chasing UM starter Brandon Rowan. Martin's solo homer in the third cut the deficit to one, and the Tigers tied the contest with an

unearned run in the fourth. The Blue Raiders retook the lead in the sixth when Alex Watson beat out an infield single, went to third on a two-out single from Martin, and scored on a single from Jagers. But Blue Raider reliever Josh Anderson was unable to hold the lead, giving up three straight one-out singles in the seventh, with Martin scoring on a single to right from Robbie Goss. Beachum and Eakes both singled to leadoff the bottom of the seventh, putting runners on the corners. Beachum scored on a balk, but the Raiders were unable to push across another run, as Eakes was thrown out at the plate by Martin to end the inning, the second straight inning the leftfielder got an assist to end an inning. The Blue Raiders had a chance to tie the game in the eighth, with Martin drawing a leadoff walk and Jagers moving the runner up with a sacrifice bunt. Birkofer's blooper down the leftfield line looked to score the run, but Martin again gunned down his third runner of the game at the plate, with Memphis holding on to the one-run advantage. Blue Raider starter Jeff Kasser gave up three run on four hits in 2.1 inning. Chase Swing came on in relief and was terrific, allowing an unearned run in four-plus innings with two strikeouts. Rowan lasted one-plus inning, allowing four runs on five hits with one strikeout. The Blue Raiders and Tigers play again Wednesday at 3 p.m. at Reese Smith Field before Middle Tennessee hosts South Alabama this weekend.

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