Martin, Woodward Lead 8-4 Victory

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JONESBORO, Ark. - Todd Martin doubled, homered and scored three times, and Allan Woodward struck out seven in 3.2 innings of relief to get the victory, as Middle Tennessee scored twice in both the seventh and eighth innings to take an 8-4 victory over Arkansas State Sunday afternoon at Tomlinson Stadium. With the win the Blue Raiders (21-19, 7-7 Sun Belt) take the series, their third straight series victory in Jonesboro and second Sun Belt series win this season. Middle Tennessee jumped out to a 4-1 lead, only to see ASU (26-17, 6-9) score three times in the sixth to knot the contest at four. But the Blue Raiders plated a pair of runs in both the seventh and eighth innings, including a controversial two-run homer in the seventh from Michael McKenry to take the victory. Woodward (4-1) came on in relief in the sixth, allowing two inherited runners to score to tie the score. But the righthander settled down and gave up two hits and a walk in the final three innings of the game, striking out a career-high seven in 3.2 innings of work to get his third consecutive victory. Martin doubled and scored in the first, hit a solo homer in the fifth, and walked and scored on McKenry's home run in the seventh. Nathan Hines and Adam Warren both had a pair of hits in the win for the Blue Raiders. Middle Tennessee starter Chase Swing worked into the sixth for the second straight outing, allowing four runs on six hits. The righthander walked one and struck out one in his first start against a Sun Belt foe since his freshman season. "This is a big series win, a very clutch performance throughout the lineup," head coach Steve Peterson said. "No one was bigger and better than Allan Woodward. He's showed us a lot of courage in the short time he's been here. He would have rather had a save, but he'll take a win. "Chase Swing did an outstanding job in five innings. His pitch count was good, but Arkansas State started taking more pitches, so we had to go to Woodward maybe a little sooner than I wanted." The Blue Raiders got on the board first with a pair of doubles in the first. Martin doubled with one out into the left-centerfield gap, and Nate Jaggers followed with a double into rightcenter, scoring a run for a 1-0 lead. Another two-bagger, this one from Marcus Taylor just inside the first base bag, came with one out in the second. Josh Archer's two-out single past a diving Mike Sirianni at third base scored the run for a 2-0 Middle Tennessee lead. Martin gave the Blue Raiders a 3-0 lead with a wind-blown solo homer in the fifth, his fifth

round-tripper of the season. The Indians cut into the lead in the bottom of the inning, with Sirianni doubling with two outs and Isaac Dillon drawing a walk. Chris Prothro then singled to left, scoring Sirianni, but Swing got Michael Williams to fly out and end the threat with the Blue Raiders still leading, 3-1. Middle Tennessee got the run back in the sixth after a leadoff double from Hines. The freshman moved to third on a wild pitch and scored on Taylor's groundout for a 4-1 advantage. Swing got into trouble in the bottom of the sixth, with Chris Rich belting a solo homer with one out in the inning. Geoff Desmond then singled and Kevin Kull followed with an infield single, chasing the Blue Raider starter from the game. Josh Anderson came on in relief and hit the only batter he faced before Woodward entered the contest with the bases loaded. Sirianni tied the contest with a single to left, plating Desmond and Kull. Woodward then retired Dillon with a strikeout and Prothro on a fly ball to end the inning with the game tied at four. The Raiders came right back in the seventh, but not without controversy. Martin drew a one-out walk before McKenry blasted a towering two-run homer down the leftfield line. Home plate umpire Brian Martin called the ball fair, much to the dismay of the ASU catcher, Prothro, and head coach Keith Kessinger, who came out to argue, but to no avail. Middle Tennessee added two insurance runs in the eighth after a leadoff double from Jeff Beachum. Taylor moved the runner over with a sacrifice bunt, and Warren singled home Beachum. Warren moved to second on a single by pinch-hitter Adam Darby, third on a fly ball, and scored on a wild pitch for an 8-4 Blue Raiders lead. The Blue Raiders take the week off because of final exams and begin a three-game homestand next Friday at 7 p.m. versus Florida International. **GAME NOTES** The game was the last for volunteer assistant coach Andy Haines. The three-year veteran of the Middle Tennessee staff is leaving this week after accepting an assistant coach position for the Gary, Ind., team in the Northern League ... Chase Swing made his second start of the season and seventh of his career. His last start against a Sun Belt foe came versus New Orleans on May 23, 2002, in the Sun Belt Championships ... Nate Jaggers extended his hitting streak to 10 games with a double in the first ... Adam Warren extended his hitting streak to 12 games with an infield single in the sixth ... Jeff Beachum extended his hitting streak to 10 games with a double in the eighth ... The Blue Raiders have now won all five series against Arkansas State since joining the Sun Belt by the same 2-1 margin.

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