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Baseball falls at Memphis, 7-6

Junior Justin Miller had a home run and four RBIs in the loss

Athletic Communications

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MEMPHIS, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee baseball team fell at the hands of the Memphis Tigers this afternoon for the first time since 2008. A ninth inning bases-loaded single pushed home the game-deciding run for the Tigers, 7-6. It was a back-and-forth battle that saw Middle Tennessee take an early two-run lead, only to go down two runs in the sixth, and then draw to a tie in the eighth.

"We had some big hits and we also ran into those at bats where we couldn't get anything done," said Coach Steve Peterson, "I've got to give the team credit for bouncing back, but we just could not string things together."

Offensively, junior [Justin Miller](#) starred for the Blue Raiders (1-1), going 2-3 at the plate with a walk and four runs batted in. The Knoxville native also hit the first Middle Tennessee home run of the season in the eighth inning. Senior [Blake McDade](#) tied a career high with four hits in five at bats on the day. He also knocked in a pair of runs. Sophomore [Justin Guidry](#) went 3-4 on the day with a run scored and a stolen base. Senior [Stuart Meinhart](#) scored a pair of runs, and junior [Bryce Brentz](#) went 2-5 on the day with a run scored.



Junior Justin Miller put together a career day for the Blue Raiders. ()

Freshman Daniel Palo made his Middle Tennessee debut on the mound, pitching 4.1 innings with 2 earned runs while surrendering eight hits. Junior [Hunter Dawson](#) relieved Palo, allowing three runs in an inning pitched. Junior Eric Gilley replaced Dawson for .2 innings, and Hyde pitched the final 2.1 innings, and was credited with the loss.

The Blue Raiders struck in the first inning. After putting down the first two Middle Tennessee batters down in order, Brentz reached base on an infield single to the shortstop. Upon drawing a balk from Memphis pitcher Ryan Fraser, Brentz scored on a Will Skinner single up the middle.

Middle Tennessee notched their second run in the top of the second. [Justin Guidry](#) singled to the shortstop to lead off the second inning. After [Stuart Meinhart](#) fouled out on a fly ball, Guidry stole second and advanced to third on a throwing error by Memphis catcher Philip Chapman. Guidry would score on a groundball out by [Justin Miller](#).

The Tigers notched their first run of the game in the bottom of the second. Tyler Huelsing doubled deep off the left field wall in the first Memphis at bat of the inning. A Jacob Wilson single to right field scored Huelsing. Following a wild pitch later in the inning, Wilson reached third base, but he would be left stranded to end the inning.

Middle Tennessee scored another run in the fourth. After a Guidry ground out, Meinhart earned a walk. A double by Miller to deep left center plated Meinhart to put the Blue Raiders up 3-1 in the fourth.

With one out registered in the bottom of the fourth frame, Memphis knocked out the first home run of the series. Wilson got a hold of a 3-2 pitch and sent it out to deep center to bring the Tigers within one, 3-2.

Memphis took their first lead on the afternoon with a three run sixth inning. Trey Wiedman started off the inning with a double off the left field wall. Following an out by Huelsing, Wilson singled to deep left field to bring in the game-tying score in Wiedman. A Derrick Thomas single to right center moved Wilson to third, and a Robby Graham double gave the Tigers a 4-3 lead and advanced Thomas to third. Chapman brought in the third and final run of the inning with a single through the left side to put up Memphis 5-3 at the end of the sixth.

The Blue Raiders cut the deficit to one in the top of the seventh. [Drew Robertson](#) reached base on a one-out double. After a swinging strikeout by Brentz, McDade doubled off the wall in centerfield to bring the score to 5-4.

Memphis regained their two-run lead in the bottom half of the seventh. Chad Zurcher opened up with a single through the right side and Adam McClain drew a walk before the first out was recorded. Zurcher reached third thanks to a deep sacrifice fly by Wiedman. Zurcher would score after the Blue Raiders couldn't convert a double play in time to end the inning.

The eighth inning saw the game draw back to a tie after the Blue Raiders scored a pair of runs. Guidry led off the inning with a double and advanced to third on a wild pitch. However, Guidry couldn't score on a squeeze play, and Meinhart reached first. Miller

followed up Meinhart with a two-run shot over the wall in left field to make the score 6-6.

The final inning saw Memphis get Drew Martinez on base with a one out single to left field. Zurcher put down a sacrifice bunt, but reached base on a fielding error by Hyde. McClain and Wiedman followed with back-to-back singles to end the game at 7-6.

The Blue Raiders were outhit on the day 17-13 with both teams committing an error. Middle Tennessee also left seven men on base to Memphis' five.

The Blue Raiders will look to rebound in the rubber game of the series tomorrow at FedExPark on the campus of the University of Memphis. The game will be played at 1 p.m. Junior [Chad Edwards](#) is slated to make his first start of the season.

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