Bats power Blue Raiders to victory

Kenneth Roberts earns first win of the season

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JACKSONVILLE, Ala. - Four Blue Raiders hit home runs to power Middle Tennessee to its sixth straight win at Jacksonville State on Friday, 10-3. All-American Kenneth Roberts notched his first victory of the season. Roberts put together his best start of the season, pitching a solid seven innings, allowing five hits, two walks and two runs. Hunter Dawson relieved Roberts in the eighth and pitched an inning and two-thirds with four strikeouts. "The offense was great, but the key was Kenny Roberts," said Coach Steve Peterson. "He pitched seven strong innings, and it was really great to see him back." Middle Tennessee (7-1) put on another offensive display, tallying four home runs and 19 hits. The Blue Raiders were led by Tyler Burnett, who went 3-5 at the plate with a pair of doubles, a home run, and three runs batted in. Justin Miller also went 3-5 with a home run and Will Skinner went 2-5 with a home run and two RBI. The duo has now homered in three consecutive games. All-American slugger Bryce Brentz knocked out his first home run of the season with a solo shot in the fourth. Blake McDade went 2-2 at the plate with three walks. The senior first baseman has now gone 13 consecutive plate appearances without recording an out. The Blue Raiders opened up the game with a pair of runs in the first. Burnett led off with a double to left center, and Zach Hudson followed up with a double to center to plate Burnett. After a Brentz strikeout, McDade singled up the middle to score Hudson. Middle Tennessee tacked on two more in the second. Miller led off the inning with a double to center. Drew Robertson reached on an infield single that hit off the pitcher. Ryan Ford reached on a fielder's choice that forced Robertson out at second. Burnett doubled off the wall in left field to plate Miller and advance Ford to third. A Hudson sacrifice fly scored Ford. Jacksonville State (2-7) cut the deficit to three with a solo home run in the bottom of the third. Todd Cunningham led off and launched the first pitch he saw over the left field wall. The Blue Raiders put up a big inning in the fourth. After a Robertson strikeout, Ford singled down the left field line, and Burnett followed him up with a home run over the right field fence. Hudson recorded an out in the next at bat, and Brentz sent one over the wall in center field for his first home run of the season. McDade reached on a walk in the next at bat, Will Skinner homered to right to put Middle Tennessee up 9-1. The power surge for Middle Tennessee continued in the top of the fifth as Miller continued his impressive play as of late and led off the inning with a solo home run over the left field wall. JSU homered again in the sixth. Kyle Bluestein sent a one out blast over the

right field fence. The Gamecocks added another run in the ninth. After loading the bases with a walk and two hitters being hit by errant pitches, another walk brought the final score to 10-3. Middle Tennessee will look for its seventh consecutive win on Saturday when they face Jacksonville State again in game two of the weekend series. Daniel Palo is slated to start for the Blue Raiders. First pitch is slated for 1 p.m. at Rudy Abbott Field.

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