Blue Raiders fall at Jacksonville State

Brentz, Skinner hit home runs

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JACKSONVILLE, Ala. - After scoring 10 or more runs in each of the previous four games, Middle Tennessee fell at Jacksonville State for their second loss of the season, 8-5. Daniel Palo made his third start of the season, pitching four and one third innings, allowing two runs on four hits and walking two. Nick Montgomery entered in relief with victories in all three of his previous appearances, but after allowing four runs in an inning of work, he left with his first loss since May of the 2009 season. Justin Guidry and Hunter Adkins also pitched, and Adkins proved the more effective of the two, giving up one run and two hits while striking out four over the final two and two thirds innings. "Our bullpen's been pretty good this season, but they couldn't get it done today," said Coach Steve Peterson. "Adkins pitched pretty well, but we couldn't score runs." The Blue Raiders (7-2) were led by Bryce Brentz, who went 3-5 with a pair of runs and a home run. The solo shot in the sixth was the All-American's second in as many days. Skinner accounted for the other Blue Raider home run of the day. The junior from Murfreesboro has now homered in four consecutive games. Skinner also went 2-4 at the plate with a walk and two runs scored. Middle Tennessee struck first in the second inning. After a Blake McDade out, one that

ended a streak of 13 straight plate appearances without recording an out, Skinner homered to center. The Blue Raiders continued to threaten in the frame, loading the bases with two outs for Zach Hudson, but failed to score another run. JSU (3-7) evened the score in the third. Blake Seguin hit a ball to right center, and an initial bobble by Brentz allowed him to reach second. Following a Todd Cunningham out, Bert Smith singled through the left side to score Seguin. The Gamecocks took their first lead of the series in the bottom half of the fifth. Andrew Edge led off the frame with a single, and a sacrifice bunt by Seguin moved Edge to second and chased Palo from the game. Montgomery took over relief duties for the Blue Raiders, and forced a line out by Cunningham. Smith earned a walk, and a hard ground ball just missed a diving Miller's glove for a single, scoring Edge to put Jacksonville State up 2-1 after five. Middle Tennessee regained the lead with three runs in the sixth. Brentz led off the inning with a home run to left field. Following a McDade out, Skinner singled to right and advanced to second on a wild pitch. A Justin Miller single to left center brought on the first JSU pitching change of the game. Tyler Acker hit into what would likely be a double play, but a fielding error by Seguin allowed Skinner to score while advancing Miller to second. Stuart Meinhart earned a walk to load the bases. After a Ryan Ford strikeout, Hudson stepped to the plate once again with the bases loaded and two out. This time he earned a walk to score Miller. Justin Guidry struck out to end the inning. Jacksonville State took back the lead with five runs in the bottom half of the sixth. A walk by Jake Sharrock and Daniel Adamson opened the inning. A deep fly ball out by Sam Eberle allowed Sharrock to advance to third. After Adamson stole second, an Edge single through the right side scored both Sharrock and Adamson to tie the game. Seguin doubled down the left field line to score Edge and prompt a pitching change for Middle Tennessee. Guidry took his turn on the mound, and Todd Cunningham sent a ball over the wall in center for a two-run home run. Back-to-back singles by Bert Smith and Leach brought Hunter Adkins into the game at pitcher for the Blue Raiders. Adkins hit Kyle Bluestein to load the bases, but Sharrock and Adamson both recorded outs in each of their second plate appearances of the frame. The Blue Raiders cut the deficit to two runs with a score in the seventh. Brentz started the inning off with a single through the left side. After a McDade out, Skinner earned a walk and Miller recorded an out. Alex Jones entered the game at pitcher for JSU, but walked Acker to load the bases. A passed ball allowed Brentz to score, but Meinhart couldn't take advantage and stranded two to end the inning. The Gamecocks regained their three run advantage in the bottom of the seventh, as Sam Eberle launched the first pitch he saw over the left field wall, putting Jacksonville State up 8-5. The Blue Raiders were outhit 13-9 on the day, marking the first time that Middle Tennessee's record less than 10 hits since the first game of the season. The Blue Raiders also left 12 men on base over the course of the game. Middle Tennessee will look for its third consecutive series win in the rubber game tomorrow at Rudy Abbot Field. First pitch is slated for 1 p.m.

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