Blue Raiders Fall at Belmont, 6-5

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Ben Petscsh's RBI single in the bottom of the ninth gave Belmont a 6-5 victory over Middle Tennessee in a seesaw affair Tuesday afternoon at Greer Stadium.

The game had four lead changes and a host of other missed opportunities for both teams. It also included nine pitchers, five for Middle Tennessee.

The Blue Raiders (3-1) erased a two-run deficit in the sixth when Marcus Taylor belted a two-run homer to right. Josh Horn's two-out, two-run double to rightcenter in the eighth gave Middle Tennessee a 5-3 advantage.

But the host Bruins (3-4) scored twice in the bottom of the eighth, once on a pinch-hit single to right by Sam Grooms and then on a sacrifice fly from Jon Camp.

Middle Tennessee's Taylor Dennis drew a leadoff walk to start the ninth, but was left standing at first after the 3-4-5 hitters in the Blue Raiders order failed to get a hit.

In the bottom of the ninth Matt Warnat's double fell in rightcenter after Taylor could not find the ball off the bat. After an intentional walk and a strikeout, Petsch lofted third hit of the game into leftcenter, scoring Warnat and giving Belmont its first win over the Blue Raiders in Nashville since 1982.

Brandon Paetznick (1-0), the fourth Belmont hurler in the game, tossed one scoreless inning to get the victory. Allan Woodward (0-1) suffered the loss for Middle Tennessee, giving up the one run on two hits in one-plus innings of work.

Adam Warren was 2-for-4 and scored twice for the Blue Raiders, who managed just eight hits in the game.

The Blue Raiders got on the board first in the third inning thanks to a Belmont error.

Jeff Beachum's shot to BU third baseman Camp bounced away and the throw was low, getting by

the first baseman and allowing Beachum to move to second. A one-out grounder by Todd Martin moved the runner to third and Beachum made a nice read on a ball in the dirt, scoring on the wild pitch for a 1-0 Middle Tennessee lead.

In the bottom of the inning Brady Manifold was hit with a 1-2 pitch to start the inning, but Blue Raiders starter Chad Edwards picked him off trying to steal second. Matt Reynolds followed with an infield single to the leftside before Petsch belted an 0-2 pitch over the leftfield wall for a 2-1 Bruins lead.

Middle Tennessee missed a great chance to at least tie the score in the fifth, with Wayne Kendrick drawing a one-out walk and Martin following with a double down the rightfield line. But Michael McKenry struck out swinging and Nathan Hines took a called third strike, ending the inning and the threat with Belmont holding onto a 2-1 advantage.

Belmont added a run in the bottom of the inning with three straight singles from Petsch, Wilson Tucker and Kane Simmons against Blue Raiders reliever Langdon Stanley. Simmons' single to rightcenter plated Petsch for a 3-1 Bruins lead.

Middle Tennessee knotted the game at three in the sixth when Warren singled with one out and Taylor blasted a 1-0 pitch over the rightfield wall, Taylor's first hit of the season, for a two-run shot.

The Blue Raiders regained the lead in the eighth when Rawley Bishop and Warren both singled with one out. Horn then delivered a two-out double to rightcenter, scoring both runners for a 5-3 Middle Tennessee advantage.

In the bottom of the inning Tucker singled to leadoff and Simmons doubled off the base of the centerfield wall, both against Blue Raiders reliever Brett Reilley. Grooms singled against reliever Josh Anderson, scoring one run. Camp's sacrifice fly to centerfield scored Simmons, tying the game at five.

In the top of the ninth Dennis walked to set up the middle of the Blue Raiders order. Martin struck out, McKenry lined out hard to left and Hines flied out, leaving Dennis standing at first.

Edwards worked four innings and allowed two runs on four hits. He walked one and struck out three and pitched well except for three hitters in the third inning when Belmont scored its runs. Stanley worked three innings, allowing one run on three hits and striking out two.

Belmont starter Josh Moffitt lasted five innings, giving up one run on two hits. Moffitt walked four and struck out three. Ben Meador allowed two runs on two hits in one inning of work, and Charles Lee gave up two runs on three hits in a two-inning stint.

The Blue Raiders host Missouri State in a three-game series at Reese Smith Field beginning Friday at 3 p.m.

GAME NOTES

Jeff Beachum's leadoff single on the game's first pitch extended his career-long hitting streak to 15 games dating to last season ... Todd Martin's double in the fifth extended his hitting streak to seven games dating to last season ... Wayne Kendrick was thrown out of the game in the top of the seventh. His three-game hitting streak came to an end ... Rawley Bishop extended his hitting streak

to three games with a single in the eighth ... Josh Horn extended his hitting streak to four games with a double in the eighth ... Redshirt freshman Taylor Dennis made his Blue Raider debut at second base in the bottom of the seventh inning. His first career plate appearance resulted in a walk in the ninth ... The loss for Allan Woodward is his first defeat in his last 21 appearances. The only previous loss in his career came March 18, 2005, at Southwest Missouri State ... The loss was Middle Tennessee's first in Nashville since March 17, 1982, a span of 10 games.

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