Raiders Fall in 10 Innings, 9-8

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CARBONDALE, Ill. - Bret Maugeri's two-run single in the bottom of the 10th gave Southern Illinois a 9-8 victory Saturday over Middle Tennessee at Abe Martin Field in a seesaw affair that had 37 hits, nine pitchers and 26 runners left on base. Maugeri's chopper through the middle got past a drawn-in infield and plated two runs, enabling SIU to even the three-game series at one. The Salukis (12-5) erased a deficit three times in the contest before winning it in the 10th. Dusty Baker (3-0), the fourth SIU hurler in the contest, picked up the win, working two innings and allowing one run on three hits. Langdon Stanley (0-2) suffered the loss for Middle Tennessee (5-6), giving up two runs on one hit in one-third of an inning. The Blue Raiders scored five runs in the first three innings of the game but led just 5-4 heading into the fourth. SIU tied the contest at five in the fifth, but Middle Tennessee went ahead again, 7-5, with two runs in the sixth. But the home team scored once in the seventh and again in the eighth. And if not for some stellar defense in the bottom of the ninth, SIU might have won without extra innings. Middle Tennessee's Wayne Kendrick led off the top of the 10th with a single to right and moved to second on Jeff Beachum's sacrifice bunt. Michael McKenry then singled to left, plating Kendrick for an 8-7 Middle Tennessee lead. In the bottom of the inning Hunter Harrigan was hit by a 1-2 pitch, as was Dean Cademartori. A wild pitch moved runners to second and third. Stanley struck out pinch-hitter Chris McCulloch and intentionally walked Erik Alvarez to set up the doubleplay. Maugeri then chopped a 1-2 pitch past a diving Kendrick and into centerfield, scoring pinch-runner Brendan Lutz and Cademartori for the 9-8 triumph. Marcus Taylor led the Blue Raiders with a career-high four hits in the contest, while Kendrick had three hits and scored three times and McKenry had three hits and drove in two runs. Doug Birkofer and Josh Horn added two hits apiece in Middle Tennessee 19-hit attack. Scott Elmendorf collected three hits for the second straight game for the Salukis and drove in two runs, while Cademartori and Matt Brewer added two hits and Cademartori scored three times.

Neither team's starting pitcher lasted longer than the third inning. Middle Tennessee's Tyler Copeland had his shortest career outing as a starter, working 1.2 innings and allowing four runs, two earned, on five hits. Brett Reilley came on in relief, giving up one run on six hits in 3.1-plus innings before giving way to Chad Edwards, who tossed two innings and allowed one run. Allan Woodward gave up one run on four hits in two innings as well. For the Salukis, starter Cody Adams allowed five runs on eight hits in 2.1 innings, while Danny Wells gave up two runs on four hits in 2.2-plus frames before giving way to Brewer, SIU's regular third baseman, who tossed three scoreless innings, allowing just three hits. The Blue Raiders scored twice in the first on three hits, starting with a leadoff infield single from Birkofer. Kendrick followed with a single to right and McKenry scored Birkofer with a one-out double to rightcenter. Todd Martin's groundout plated Kendrick for an early 2-0 lead. SIU plated an unearned run in the bottom of the inning after a leadoff double by Kevin Koski to deep centerfield, off the glove of Birkofer. Elmendorf then bunted down the first base line and beat the throw. The ball got away after hitting Elmendorf, allowing Koski to score on the play. Middle Tennessee came back with two more runs in the second, beginning with a leadoff single up the middle by Taylor, off the glove of shortstop Tyler Lairson. A groundout moved Taylor to second and he scored on Horn's single to right. Birkofer then reached on another infield single. Kendrick's ground ball to first forced Birkofer at second, but the relay throw for the doubleplay was wild, allowing Horn to score for a 4-1 edge. The Blue Raiders loaded the bases later in the inning, but Martin struck out looking to end the threat. The Salukis answered with three runs of their own on three hits to tie the contest in the bottom of the second, beginning with a one-out single off Copeland's glove by Brewer. Alvarez then blooped a single into leftcenter, putting runners on the corners before Nathan Emrick's single to center plated Brewer. After a bunt put runners on second and third with two outs, Koski was hit to load the bases and Elmendorf drew a walk, forcing in Alvarez. Grant Gerrard's grounder to first was booted by Michael McSweeney, allowing Emrick to score and ending Copeland's day after just an inning-and-two-thirds. The Blue Raiders regained the lead in the third, but an unlucky bounce kept the visitors from adding more than one run. Taylor belted a one-out double to right and scored on McSweeney's first career hit, a blooper down the rightfield line. Horn and Birkofer both drew walks to load the bases, chasing Adams from the contest. Kendrick laced a ball up the middle against Wells, but it bounced off the mound and right to Lairson, who stepped on the bag and fired to first for the doubleplay, keeping the game at 5-4 Middle Tennessee. SIU knotted the game again in the fifth, but Reilley worked out of a jam to keep the score tied at five. Cademartori was hit to start the inning and moved to second on a sacrifice bunt. Alvarez's single to center tied the game at five, and Emrick followed with a perfect hit-and-run single to right to put runners on the corners. After a stolen base by Emrick, Reilley struck out Lairson before intentionally walking Koski to load the bases. The righthander then induced Elmendorf to ground out, working out of the mess and keeping the game tied. Middle Tennessee finally got to Wells in the sixth, with Kendrick singling to leadoff and Beachum following with a run-scoring double to leftcenter, ending the day for the SIU lefthander. Two hitters later Martin singled through the right side off Brewer, plating Beachum for a 7-5 advantage. Reilley got into a jam in the sixth, walking Gerrard on four pitches and then allowing a bunt single to Harrigan. Edwards entered the contest and recorded an out at third base on a sacrifice attempt, induced a ground ball from Brewer and struck out Alvarez to end the threat with the Blue Raiders holding on to the two-run lead. Middle Tennessee had a chance to expand the lead in the seventh. Taylor singled to leadoff and Rawley Bishop was then hit by the pitch. Horn moved both runners over with a sacrifice bunt, but Taylor was tagged out at the plate on Birkofer's grounder and Kendrick fouled out to end the threat. The Salukis pushed across a run in their half of the seventh, cutting the deficit in half. Maugeri singled up the middle to start the inning and moved to second on a sacrifice bunt from Lairson. With two outs Elmendorf dumped a single down the rightfield line, plating

Maugeri and cutting the Blue Raider lead to 7-6. In the eighth Cademartori doubled down the leftfield line with two outs against Woodward and went to third on a wild pitch. Brewer then beat out an infield single off the end of the bat, plating Cademartori with the tying run. Taylor singled to start the ninth for Middle Tennessee and moved to second on Bishop's sacrifice. With two outs pinch-hitter Nathan Hines smashed a drive to rightfield, but the cross-wind held the ball up and allowed Gerrard to make the catch on the warning track. In the bottom of the ninth, Maugeri lined to leftfield, where Adam Warren slipped and fell but still caught the ball for the first out. Lairson then singled to center and Koski laced a drive into rightcenter, where Taylor made a terrific diving catch over his left shoulder for the second out. After a single from Elmendorf, Gerrard's long drive into rightcenter hung up in the wind, allowing Hines to run under it and send the game to extra innings. The series concludes Sunday at 1 p.m. at Abe Martin Field. **GAME NOTES**

Michael McSweeney started for the second straight day, hitting eighth and playing first base. The redshirt sophomore collected his first career hit with an RBI single in the third ... Tyler Copeland last just 1.2 innings, the shortest start of his career. Twice last season (April 30 - at Arkansas State, May 14 - at Louisiana-Lafayette) the lefthander worked only two innings in a start ... Doug Birkofer extended his hitting streak to three games with a leadoff single in the first ... Michael McKenry extended his hitting streak to six games with a double in the first ... Jeff Beachum extended his hitting streak to six games with an infield single in the second ... Marcus Taylor extended his hitting streak to three games with a single in the second ... Josh Horn extended his hitting streak to four games with a single in the second ... Marcus Taylor recorded a career-high four hits in the game ... Doug Birkofer had his second straight two-hit game and third of his career ... Wayne Kendrick tied his career-high with three hits in the contest, his second three-hit game this season ... Josh Horn had his fourth straight two-hit game and sixth this season.

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