

Blue Raiders Fall at APSU, 8-4

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CLARKSVILLE, Tenn. -

Austin Peay's Rowdy Hardy gave up one earned run in 6.2 innings and Ryan Kane and Jake Lane both drove in a pair of runs in an 8-4 victory over Middle Tennessee

Wednesday night at Raymond C. Hand Park. Hardy (3-0), the Govs top starter, allowed six hits to get the win, walking three and striking out three.

The lefthander worked into the seventh inning and around leadoff walks in the first and second innings, giving up just a solo homer in the fifth. Three runs scored in the seventh before he departed were the result of an error. Brad Daniel came on to get the final seven

outs of the contest for his third save of the year, though he made it interesting. Middle Tennessee loaded the bases in the ninth before Jeff Beachum lined out sharply to center to end the contest. Austin Peay (11-5) scored once in the first, third and fourth to take the lead, then added two runs in both the fifth and sixth innings to seize control of the contest. The win ended a six-game winning streak for Middle Tennessee in the series and was APSU's first victory since March 24, 2002. Brett Luther had three hits for the Govs, while Kane and Cody Youngblood both had two hits and Matt Ledbetter scored twice. Middle Tennessee (5-8) had just eight hits, three from Wayne Kendrick, who also had three RBIs. Middle Tennessee starter Chad Edwards (0-2) worked four-plus innings for Middle Tennessee to take the loss, giving up three earned runs on seven hits with one strikeout. Brett Reilley allowed two hits and two unearned runs in 1.2 innings of work, striking out two. Jimmy Kelly gave up one run in two-plus innings, and Nick Marrs made his first career appearance, striking out the only batter he faced. APSU scored a run in the bottom of the first when Brandon Munsey drew a one-out walk and Kane followed with a double to rightcenter. Lane's sacrifice fly to left gave the home team an early 1-0 lead. In the third Ledbetter drew a leadoff walk, moved to second on a groundout, third on a bunt and scored on Kane's two-out bunt single for a 2-0 Govs advantage. Lane led off the fourth with a double to rightcenter but was thrown out trying to stretch it to a triple. Ryan Gilboy followed with his own double and scored on Luther's two-out single to center for a 3-0 APSU edge. Josh Horn got the Blue Raiders on the board with a solo homer just inside the leftfield foul pole in the fifth, his first career round-tripper. Rawley Bishop followed with a sharp single and moved to second on an error by the centerfielder, but groundouts by Doug Birkofer and Kendrick ended the

inning with Middle Tennessee still trailing, 3-1. The Govs came back with two runs in the bottom of the frame, though, chasing Edwards from the contest. Ledbetter reached on an error and Youngblood followed with a double, putting runners on second and third. After an intentional walk loaded the bases, Reilley forced in a run with a walk to Lane. A fielder's choice from Gilboy plated another run for a 5-1 lead for Austin Peay. The home team added two more runs in the sixth on two hits and one big Middle Tennessee error. Jake Schroeder singled to leadoff and Luther followed with a bunt up the first base line, avoiding Bishop's tag to reach safely. After a sacrifice from Tommy Smith and a strikeout, Youngblood was intentionally walked to load the bases. Munsey's grounder to Beachum was booted, allowing a run to score, and a walk to Kane forced in another run for a 7-1 Govs advantage. The Blue Raiders got back in the game with a couple of hits and an APSU error in the seventh, ending Hardy's night. Adam Warren led off with a single to left and pinch-hitter Grant Nickell reached on an error by Munsey at second base. Bishop walked with one out to load the bases and Kendrick's two-out triple to rightcenter cleared the bases and ended Hardy's night, cutting the deficit to 7-4. In the seventh the Govs added a run, starting with a leadoff single by Smith, who moved to second on a balk. Ledbetter moved the runner to third with a sacrifice and Youngblood's single to center past a drawn-in infield scored Smith for an 8-4 lead. In the ninth Horn walked with one out and Birkofer singled with two outs down the leftfield line. Kendrick's third hit of the night loaded the bases, but Beachum's sharp liner ended the contest for Middle Tennessee's eighth loss in 10 games. The Blue Raiders host UT Martin Thursday at 3 p.m. at Reese Smith Field before heading to Birmingham Southern for a weekend series beginning Friday. **GAME NOTES** Todd Martin extended his hitting streak to three games with a single in the second ... Wayne Kendrick extended his hitting streak to four games with a single in the third ... Josh Horn extended his hitting streak to six games with a solo home run in the fifth, his first career round-tripper ... Doug Birkofer extended his hitting streak to six games with a single in the ninth.

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