Raiders Even Mark with 12-1 Victory

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Matt Scott gave up one run in five innings and Middle Tennessee pounded out 10 hits in a 12-1 victory over Samford Wednesday afternoon at Reese Smith Field.

The Blue Raiders (11-11) evened their record for the first time since March 10 at Southern Illinois. Middle Tennessee has won five of its last six games, including four of five at home.

The Blue Raiders scored in six of eight innings and had eight different players with RBIs in the contest, taking advantage of six Samford walks and also using the long ball, belting three home runs in the contest.

Scott (4-1) allowed a solo homer and three hits overall in the first midweek start of his career. The righthander walked one and struck out two. He drew the start because Middle Tennessee does not play this weekend and head coach Steve Peterson wanted to keep Scott sharp instead of letting him go two weeks between appearances.

Peter Mantzanis worked two scoreless innings, while Chad Edwards and Allan Woodward both pitched one inning to finish up for the Blue Raiders.

Samford starter Phillip Whitten (1-1) took the loss, tossing two innings and giving up five runs, three earned, on three hits while walking two. The Bulldogs used six pitchers in the game, a staff day for Samford. Doug Denson allowed two runs in two innings and Daniel Davidson gave up three runs without getting an out.

Dillon Heath was the only Blue Raider with more than one hit, going 2-for-4 with a triple, a run and

one RBI. Heath, a freshman who drew his first career start on Tuesday, was 5-for-9 with three runs scored in the series.

Todd Martin and Michael McKenry both scored twice for Middle Tennessee.

The Blue Raiders scored three times in the first on two hits and one big Samford error. Martin singled with two outs and McKenry followed with a walk.

Adam Warren then singled to right, scoring a run, and the ball rolled under the glove of Bear Burnett and all the way to the wall. McKenry scored from first and Warren kept motoring around, scoring easily for a 3-0 Middle Tennessee advantage after an inning.

The Blue Raiders added two more run in the second. Rawley Bishop was hit to leadoff the inning and Heath, continuing his hot-hitting, tripled into the gap in rightcenter, scoring Bishop. Two batters later Jeff Beachum lined out to center, scoring Heath for a 5-0 lead.

Marcus Taylor led off the fourth with a triple to leftcenter and scored when a pickoff throw from SU catcher P.J. Fandetti sailed into leftfield, giving the Blue Raiders a 6-0 edge.

Bear Burnett got the Bulldogs on the board with a solo homer in the fifth, his third of the year.

But the Blue Raiders added two runs in the bottom of the inning on solo home runs from Wayne Kendrick, his second of the year, and McKenry, his fourth round-tripper this season, for an 8-1 advantage for the home team.

In the seventh Martin led off with a walk and pinch-hitter Alex Watson singled to right. Pinch-hitter Nathan Hines then walked, loading the bases, and a walk to Taylor forced in a run. Bishop's grounder forced a runner at second and the relay throw to first was wild, allowing two runners to score on the play for an 11-1 Blue Raider lead.

Redshirt freshman Taylor Dennis ended the scoring with a solo homer in the eighth for Middle Tennessee, his first career home run.

Middle Tennessee has the weekend off and does not play again until April 4 at Lipscomb. The Blue Raiders return home April 11 to start a six-game homestand against Austin Peay.

GAME NOTES

Senior Todd Martin made his first start in centerfield this season and his first in the outfield since March 8, 2005, at Memphis, a span of 67 games ... Matt Scott made his first-ever midweek start in the contest. His previous 18 career starts all came against weekend foes or in the conference tournament ... The Blue Raiders improved to 6-3 against Samford since 1976, including 4-1 in Murfreesboro. Middle Tennessee has won the last four meetings in the series.

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