

Baseball falls in rain-soaked affair at Belmont, 11-3

Ryan Ford has a career-high four hits

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Ryan Ford had a career day at the plate for the Middle Tennessee baseball team on Tuesday, but it wasn't enough as the Blue Raiders fell to host Belmont 11-3 on a rainy day at Shelby Park in Nashville, Tenn. Ford, who previously set a career high with a three-hit day against Portland last month, went 4-for-5 at the plate with a run scored. Robert Lawrence, who entered the game as a pinch hitter was the only other Blue Raider with multiple hits, finishing 2-for-2 with a walk and a run scored. Overall, Middle Tennessee tied Belmont in hits with 12, but stranded 16 runners on base compared to Belmont's nine. On the mound, Eric Gilley got the start, pitching 3.2 innings and allowing five runs with four walks to pick up his first loss of the season. Cody Tollison came on in relief and pitched two innings and



gave up four runs (three earned). Joey McClung allowed two over 1.1 innings. Belmont opened up the scoring with a five-run frame in the bottom of the third. After stranding 11 runners on base through the first five innings, Middle Tennessee got on the board with a pair of runs in the top of the sixth. Ryan Ford led off with a single, and back-to-back walks of Jordan Rorex and Jay Morris loaded the bases. Tyler Acker hit a sacrifice fly to left to score Ford, and Will Skinner hit into a fielder's choice to plate Rorex, bringing the Blue Raiders within three at 5-2. Acker ended the day 1-for-3 with a run batted in, and Rorex was 0-for-4 with a pair of walks and a run scored. Skinner finished 2-for-5 with an RBI. The Bruins responded with a four runs in the bottom half of the sixth. A walk and a pair of bunt singles loaded the bases. An error allowed the first run to cross, and a sacrifice fly scored the

second. A single and another sacrifice fly extended the Belmont lead to 9-2. Belmont tacked on two more in the the seventh with a two-out single to right by Derek Hamblen. Brandon Hall came on to pitch the eighth for Middle Tennessee and recorded the final three Belmont outs. The Blue Raiders reclaimed a run in the top of the ninth. Lawrence opened with a two-out double to center, and scored on a Ryan Stephens single. However, Rorex would ground out to end the ball game. Stephens, who came on as a pinch hitter earlier in the game, ended 1-for-2 with an RBI. Middle Tennessee will now prepare to square off against SEC foe Kentucky in Lexington, Ky., on Wednesday. The meeting will mark the first between the two schools since 1996.

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