

Late rally leads to Blue Raider loss to Western Kentucky

Middle Tennessee and WKU will meet again on Friday at 6 p.m.

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Daniel Palo and Tanner Perkins squared off in an old-fashioned pitcher's duel on Thursday evening, but a late Western Kentucky rally spelled the end for the Middle Tennessee baseball team as they fell to their rivals 4-0 at Reese Smith Jr. Field. "We hit some balls extremely hard, but we just didn't get the big hits," head coach Steve Peterson said. "We've been pitching and playing defense very well, but we just couldn't come up with the big hit at the right time." With the loss, the Blue Raiders were eliminated from the 2011 Sun Belt Championship Tournament field. Palo was strong for much of the game, holding the Hilltoppers scoreless for the first seven innings before WKU posted four runs in the top of the eighth. Palo allowed three runs on four hits over 7.1 innings with a walk and three strikeouts. "This might have

been his best, most consistent outing," Peterson said. "He was staying in the strike zone and competing with the hitters. He really gave us a chance to win this ball game." Palo left the mound after giving up a solo home run early in the eighth, the sophomore from Germantown, Tenn., left with two runners left on base who would eventually score. Paul Mittura gave up one run over the ensuing 1.1 innings, and Joey McClung picked up the final out. Led by Hank LaRue's 3-for-4 day at the plate, Middle Tennessee outthit Western Kentucky 11-6. Matt Drake, Trent Miller and Tyler Acker all had



multi-hit outings as each went 2-for-4. Middle Tennessee will continue the their final series of the year with game two against Western Kentucky on Friday. Hunter Adkins is slated to start, and first pitch is set for 6 p.m.

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