Blue Raiders fall to Kansas in season opener

Thomas homers in first game of the season

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - A Johnny Thomas three-run blast gave Middle Tennessee an early lead, but it wouldn't last as the Blue Raiders ultimately fell to visiting Kansas 7-3 in the 2012 baseball season opener on Friday evening at Reese Smith Jr. Field. "I felt pretty good at the plate, and I had a lot of adrenaline out there," Thomas said. "I had confidence in my at bats today, and the bat felt good in my hands." Thomas ended the day 1-for-4 with three runs batted in. Ryan Ford and Ethan Williams also went 1-for-4 at the plate, and Trent Miller finished 1-for-2 with a pair of walks and a run scored. Middle Tennessee was out-hit on the day 10-5 and committed to two errors to KU's one. On the mound, Hunter Adkins pitched three innings, giving up three runs (two earned), and striking out three. Nick Montgomery came on in relief in the fourth, making his first appearance for the Blue Raiders in over a year after missing all of 2011 due to injury. The senior allowed four runs and struck out four over 2.1 innings of work, picking up the loss. Jordan Cooper and Kooper Kessler each made their Blue Raider debut, combining to pitch a hitless final 3.2 innings. Kansas got things started in the second with a Jordan Dreiling two-out triple down the right field line to bring home the first run of the game. However, Middle Tennessee provided the counterpunch in the bottom half of the frame as back-to-back Miller and Williams singles to right set up the Thomas home run. The Jayhawks responded in the third, after allowing a pair of base-runners to start the frame, Adkins recorded two quick outs, but back-to-back Alex DeLeon and Michael Suiter followed up with consecutive singles to even it up. Kansas regained the lead an inning later. Dreiling led off with a

double, eventually scoring on a Kevin Kuntz double. After a scoreless fifth frame, the Jayhawks cashed in with a DeLeon three run double in a fifth to provide the final deficit. Middle Tennessee will now prepare for the second game of opening weekend at Reese Smith Jr. Field, which will feature a match-up against Saint Louis of the Atlantic-10 Conference. Johnathan Frebis is slated to make his collegiate debut, and first pitch is scheduled for 12 p.m.

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