LaRue belts walk-off single to hand Blue Raiders first victory

Middle Tennessee posts 3-2 win over Saint Louis in the 11th

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Final Box Score (PDF)

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee and Saint Louis baseball teams engaged in a pitching duel for much of afternoon at Reese Smith Jr. Field on Saturday, but Hank LaRue came up big when it counted, knocking in the winning run in the bottom of the 11th to secure the first win of the season for the Blue Raiders. Back-to-back two out singles by Ethan Williams and Trent Miller set the table for LaRue, who laced a single down the left field line to plate Williams, handing Middle Tennessee its first extra-innings victory since a 21-20 decision over Lipscomb in 2010. LaRue finished the day 2-for-5 at the plate with a run batted in. Miller also went 2-for-5, and Ethan Williams ended 1-for-5 with a run scored. Ryan Ford played the role of hero late as well, helping the Blue Raiders send it to extras with a solo home run in the bottom of the eighth to tie it up at 2-2. The junior shortstop ended the day 2-for-5 with two runs scored and one RBI. Johnathan Frebis made the most of his Blue Raider debut, pitching five strong innings without giving up a run. The freshman from Murfreesboro ended the day allowing just three hits and striking out four. Joey McClung allowed one run in two innings of work, and Mittura gave up one and struck out two over the final four frames of the game, picking up his first win of the season. Middle Tennessee opened up the scoring in the first when Johnny Thomas followed up a lead off single by Ford with a double down the right field line. Thomas finished 1-for-5 with a run batted in. After Saint Louis manufactured a run in the sixth, the Billikens took their first lead of the game in the eighth on an Alec Sole double down the left field line. The lead was short-lived however, as Ford led off the ensuing half inning with a solo shot over the fence in left. The Billikens attempted to rally on a number of occasions over the next three frames, but Mittura proved to be effective pitching out of the stretch, setting the stage for LaRue's heroics. Middle Tennessee is set to close out play in the first annual Mule Mix Classic on Sunday with a meeting against Evansville at Reese Smith Jr. Field.

Jonathan Sisco is slated to start for the Blue Raiders, and first pitch is scheduled for 1 p.m.

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