LaRue's three RBI day not enough for Blue Raiders at ULM

MT churns out 11 hits in contest

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Final Box Score (PDF)

MONROE, La. - Hank LaRue drove in three runs on a 3-for-5 day at the plate, but the Middle Tennessee baseball team suffered a 13-7 loss to ULM in the series clincher on a windy Sunday afternoon at Warhawk Field. Justin Guidry also had a multi-RBI day, plating a pair of runs. “Conditions were very difficult from the get-go, and we didn’t handle it well,” head coach Steve Peterson said. “We made a run at it, but our pitching staff just didn’t compare to ULM’s today. They did a very good job of executing what they wanted done with our hitters.” MT produced 11 hits, but the Warhawks equaled that with 11 of their own. Along with LaRue, Jordan Rorex (2-for-5) and Johnny Thomas (2-for-4) also had multi-hit days. Gusting winds proved to be the Blue Raiders’ biggest adversary in the first. Caleb Clowers’ high fly caught a gust to drop for a single just behind second base, then the winds carried Jeremy Sy’s fly over the wall in right-center to give ULM a 2-0 lead. MT (23-18, 10-8 Sun Belt) cut the Warhawks' (19-21, 7-11 SBC) lead in half in the top of the second on back-to-back hits. Thomas delivered a one-out single, then LaRue laced a double to the rightfield corner to make it 2-1. Things unraveled for the Blue Raiders over the next three innings, though, as ULM scored five runs to open up a 7-1 lead. The Warhawks tallied an unearned run in the second, then capitalized on four walks and four hits in the next two frames to post four more runs. ULM forced MT starter Jonathan Sisco

(5-3) out of the game after just two innings, as he took the loss after giving up five runs, four of them earned, on three hits. “We had some great opportunities to put together some big innings, and we just couldn’t do that,” Peterson said. “They got the big innings early and took advantage of mistakes. I just have to do a better job coaching.” After ULM tacked on another run in the sixth, the Blue Raiders finally found an offensive groove in the seventh and cranked out five runs. Ryan Ford took a walk to open the inning, then a Ryan Stephens single and Michael Adkins walk loaded the bases. Rorex singled to left for MT’s second run and Guidry followed with a base-knock to right to plate two. MT scored another pair on a sac fly from Trent Miller and a base-hit from LaRue to cut the deficit to two. The Warhawks promptly responded with a four-spot in the bottom of the seventh and added another in the eighth to make it a 13-6 contest. Although MT mustered three hits in the top of the ninth, including another RBI-single from LaRue, ULM’s Will Browning cut the rally short with a game-ending strikeout to pick up the save. Starter Cale Wine (5-4) tossed six innings and gave up two runs on four hits to earn the victory. The Blue Raiders now break from conference action for a pair of midweek contests. MT will travel to Tennessee on Tuesday for a 6 p.m. contest, then return home to host Vanderbilt on Wednesday at 6 p.m.

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