Bats come alive as Blue Raiders defeat Ball State, 11-6

Ford goes 3-for-5 with two runs in victory

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Box Score (PDF)

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee's baseball team used a six-run, seventh inning to defeat Ball State Saturday afternoon, 11-6, at Reese Smith Jr. Field.

Last year's Sun Belt Freshman of the Year Johnathan Frebis picked up where he left off in 2012, and had a no-hitter going into the bottom of the sixth inning when a base hit squeaked through the infield.

In six innings pitched, Frebis faced 20 batters and allowed one hit while striking out four.

Senior short stop Ryan Ford was named Player of the Game after going 3-for-5 at the plate with one RBI. Ford also swapped a base and scored twice.

Joey McClung picked up his first win of the season after pitching 2.1 innings, allowing three hits and one earned run. McClung faced 11 batters and had one strikeout.

Middle Tennessee (2-0) got its bats working early when senior Trent Miller singled to right field in the bottom of the first inning and scored Ford from third.

The scoring continued in the second inning when Michael Adkins singled through the left side that scored Jake Ellison. Jordan Rorex added another run to the board when he singled up the middle, pushing Robert Lawrence across the plate and put the Blue Raiders up 3-0 after the second inning.

MT would increase its lead in the sixth inning when Lawrence hit a sacrifice fly to center field that scored Miller. During the next at-bat, Johnny Thomas scored from third on a wild pitch putting MT up 5-0 in the sixth inning.

Ball State (0-2) caught momentum in the seventh inning and scored five runs to tie the game. MT

threw three different pitchers in that inning, finally ending the rally with McClung on the mound.

The Blue Raiders bounced back to score six runs in the seventh inning and extend their lead to 11-6. Johnny Thomas's single to left field scored both Hank LaRue and Ford. Later in the inning, Lawrence came to the plate with bases loaded and drove Miller in on a groundout to third.

An error by Ball State's second baseman allowed for Johnny Thomas to score and put the Blue Raiders up 10-6. Ball State would get out of the inning but not before Ford hit another single through the right side, scoring Michael Adkins and giving MT its final run of the afternoon.

Ball State would add one more run in the eighth inning that would prove ineffective as MT closed out the game in the top of the ninth and claimed the victory.

Ball State's Clay Manering was given the loss after facing four batters and allowing one run.

Junior pitcher Zac Curtis will make his Middle Tennessee debut on the mound tomorrow in the third and final game of the series. Curtis will look to give MT its first three game sweep of the season and notch his first career win.

Tomorrow also marks Little League Sunday at Reese Smith Jr. Field. All kids who wear their little league jerseys will have free admission to the game.

First pitch is slated for 1 p.m.

HEAD COACH JIM MCGUIRE

On pitching staff past two days...
We've had two great starts with Hunter (Adkins) and (Johnathan) Frebis, and if we can get those guys going then we've got a chance to really do something down the road.

On strong play from middle infielders...
Ford and Thomas up the middle were solid today. They're great defensively turning that double play to end the game. And you feel good when they're at the plate with their good start to this season. It's all about consistency with them and hopefully they can keep it going."

Ryan Ford on the offensive outburst in the seventh inning...
The main thing is not to panic in that situation; you have to let the game come to you. A lot of times when the leadoff guy gets on base that can result in a score so I was just trying to get on base and it worked well for us.

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