Late surge squeezes Lipscomb past Blue Raiders

Miller drives in both runs for MT

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - A late-inning surge from Lipscomb propelled the Bisons to a 3-2 win over the Middle Tennessee baseball team on Wednesday afternoon at Reese Smith Jr. Field.

Despite a solid start from Garrett Ring, the loss snapped the Blue Raiders (9-3) seven-game winning streak. Ring tossed 3.2 innings and gave up one run on four hits.

Ryan Ford led MT with a 2-for-4 day at the plate and a pair of impressive defensive plays, while Trent Miller knocked in both runs for the Blue Raiders in a 1-for-4 performance.

MT got on the board first with a pair of runs in the third. Jordan Rorex and Trevor Haggard opened the frame with back-to-back walks, and Ford laid down a perfect bunt for a single to load the bases. Miller delivered a gapper to left-center for the two-RBI single.

Lipscomb (6-7) got one back in the fourth on three consecutive two-out singles, forcing Ring from the contest. Taylor Stewart drove in the run with a base-knock, scoring Zach Lowery from second to make it a 2-1 game.

In the fifth, the Bisons put a pair of runners at the corners with two outs after a walk, stolen base and wild pitch on a strikeout, but an impressive over-the-shoulder diving catch from Ford preserved the one-run lead.

Lipscomb took the lead with a two-run eighth, but the bigger concern for MT in the inning was an injury to closer Paul Mittura. After a leadoff walk by Joey McClung, Mittura threw one pitch and got the out on a sacrifice bunt, but came awkwardly off the mound to get the out and had to exit the game. Cody Tollison followed and gave up a double to Stewart for the game-tying run. After a base-

hit from Gray Hutchinson put runners at the corners, Chad Shannon laid down a bunt to squeeze home the game-winning run.

Heath Slatton made his Blue Raider debut on the mound in the contest, retiring the Bisons in order in the top of the ninth, but MT was unable to mount a comeback in the bottom half of the inning.

Tollison (0-1) took the loss after giving up one run on two hits in two-thirds of an inning. Hunter Brothers (2-0) picked up the win with three shutout innings.

The Blue Raiders remain at home this weekend, hosting Xavier for a three-game series. The series-opener is slated for Friday at 3 p.m.

HEAD COACH JIM MCGUIRE
On today's game...
"We didn't play very well today, and I am disappointed with the way we came out. Garrett kept us in the game early, but we didn't execute offensively. We got to the end and the plan was to use Paul and Slatton, but with Paul getting hurt, that hurt us there. It's hard to win that game 2-1 the way we were swinging the bat. Late in the game, Brothers came in and shut us down. It was a weird ending to the game and we had chances but we just didn't do much with them."

On the injury to Paul Mittura...
"When I went out there, I thought it was his ankle. It was a funny play and when he popped up and went to put pressure on his left leg it ended up being his hip. It's kind of a freak injury right now and that's really all I know. I have not had a chance to speak with the trainer. I could tell as soon as I went out there it wasn't going to be good for him, and we needed to get him out."

On Heath Slatton's performance on the mound (his collegiate debut)...
"I was proud of him. We wanted to get him in the game when it meant something. That was our plan today. I didn't know it was going to be in the ninth. I thought we would be able to float him in there earlier than that, but it didn't work out that way. He's got a great arm and a huge upside. We just have to get him out there a little more, and playing two midweek games that should happen. He has a huge upside as a pitcher and a hitter."

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