

Blue Raiders Can't Hold Lead In 10-7 Loss

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TROY, Ala. - Middle

Tennessee jumped out to a five-run advantage after four innings but could not hold the lead, dropping a 10-7 decision to Troy State in the rubber game of a three-game series at Riddle-Pace Field. Justin Sims and Brett Carroll each had three hits for the Blue Raiders, but the young bullpen was unable to hold the lead after Middle Tennessee starter John Williams left with the lead after the sixth. The Blue Raiders (2-2) got on the board in the top of the first when Chuck Akers led off the contest with a single off the glove of TSU third baseman Brian Lipman. Akers advanced

to second on a groundout by Marshall Nisbett and scored on a single to shallow center by Sims. Nisbett singled with one out in the third and Sims followed with a blast over the rightfield wall, his second of the season for a 3-0 Blue Raider advantage. Derek Phillips singled and Brett Carroll doubled down the leftfield line with one out in the fourth, and Phillips scored on an infield single by Akers. Carroll then crossed the plate when TSU second baseman Collin Holder misfired to first on a grounder, giving Middle Tennessee a 5-0 lead after four innings. The Trojans (7-6) got on the board in the fifth, scoring on a throwing error by catcher Phillips. TSU again threatened in the sixth and eventually pushed across a run on a bases-loaded walk to Daryl Griggs on a questionable ball four call. Coby Smith followed with another RBI walk, cutting the deficit to 5-3. But Williams worked out of the jam with a popout and a groundout, ending the sixth with the Blue Raiders still leading by two runs. Williams worked six innings, allowing three runs, two earned, on nine hits. He walked three and struck out six in throwing 112 pitches. After a single by Wade Miller and a double from Lipman, Holder blooped a singled into short right in the seventh, plating a run against Blue Raider reliever Danny Borne. A single to left by Griggs scored Lipman, knotting the game at five. A sacrifice fly to left by Smith plated Holder with the go-ahead run, giving the Trojans a 6-5 advantage after seven innings. The Trojans added insurance to the lead with a grand slam by Holder in the eighth off Middle Tennessee's Jeremy Armstrong for a 10-5 lead. The Blue Raiders threatened in the ninth, with Phillips drawing a leadoff walk, followed by singles from Carroll and Jason Howarth. Phillips scored on a groundout by Akers and Nisbett plated Carroll with a single to right, prompting a pitching change. TSU's Justin Morgan came in and got a ground ball from Sims, which started a game-

ending doubleplay. Morgan threw one pitch to earn his first save of the year. Borne (0-1) suffered the loss for the Blue Raiders, allowing three runs on four hits in 0.1 innings of work. Justin Eason got the win for Troy State (1-1), retiring the last 11 batters he faced in going eight innings. Eason allowed five runs, four earned, on nine hits with eight strikeouts. Akers had a pair of RBIs for the Blue Raiders, and he and Nisbett both had two hits in the contest. The Blue Raiders return home for a two-game set against Eastern Michigan on Tuesday and Wednesday, with both contests beginning at 3 p.m.

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