Kines Pitches Gem in 7-2 MT Win

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Junior right-hander Steven Kines made one final bid for the third spot in Middle Tennessee's weekend rotation and what a statement he made. The Germantown native hurled his first career complete game in a 7-2 win over visiting Troy State and struck out a career best nine batters along the way. Kines allowed only four hits during his tenure and didn't allow a walk. The win pushed Kines' record to 3-0 on the year and gives him his third win in his last four starts. The win put Middle Tennessee at 16-6 on the year while Troy State fell to 9-18. As brilliantly as Kines pitched in the game, it looked as if a Troy State run in the top of the first inning could be his undoing. Kines gave up a leadoff single to Coby Smith to start the game and Smith promptly stole second. A sacrifice bunt from Lance Newman advanced Smith to third and a single from Wade Miller brought the run home. Kines settled down to strike out the next two hitters and get out of the inning. From there, he would be dominant. Over the next seven innings he did not face one hitter over the minimum thanks to a key double play in the fourth inning. Finally the Blue Raiders' offensive attack broke through in the bottom of the fifth. Chuck Akers singled to left with two outs and stole second to get into scoring position. Nate Jaggers followed with a single to left that brought Akers home and tied the score. The Blue Raiders would strike the big blow in the bottom of the seventh. Jason Howarth led off the inning with an infield single and then advanced to second on a passed ball. Brett Carroll walked and Troy Harp reached on a sacrifice bunt that was misplayed by pitcher Marcus Bell, loading the bases. A fielder's choice from Akers broke the tie by plating Howarth. Nate Jaggers then blasted a pitch over the left field wall to drive in three more runs. However, the inning would not end there. Marshall Nisbett greeted reliever Shawn Andrews with a single and then advanced to third on a throwing error from Andrews on a failed pickoff attempt. Josh Archer drove Nisbett in with a solid single to right, giving the Blue Raiders a 6-1 lead at the conclusion of the frame. The Blue Raiders would add one more run in the bottom of the eighth inning on an Akers single that chased Howarth home. The Trojans would rally for a run in the top of the ninth, but it would not be enough as Kines completed

the inning for the victory. The Blue Raiders got a big night from Jaggers, who went 4-for-5 in the game with four RBIs. Howarth was 2-for-3 on the night while Akers and Nisbett each went 2-for-5. Troy State was led by Wade Miller's 3-for-4 effort, making him the only Trojan with more than one hit in the game. The team's will complete the two-game series on Wednesday afternoon at 3 PM. The Blue Raiders will begin their defense of the Sun Belt Conference title this weekend at New Orleans.

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