

UNION CITY -- Chipper Smith allowed one run in six innings and Sam Lind, Mike Mandarino and Brodie Ross each collected two hits in a 4-1 victory, but Cumberland had just three hits and dropped the second game, 1-0, against Mid-Continent in baseball action Thursday.

The games were the TranSouth Conference openers for both teams. The clubs will try to complete the series Friday weather permitting at L.H. Ladd Field at Elam Stadium.

The Bulldogs (8-7, 1-1 TranSouth) scored single runs in the first and fifth and Lind's two-run triple in the sixth gave Smith more than he needed to post his third straight victory in as many starts on the mound. The lefthander (3-2) allowed just three hits, walked three and struck out five in six innings and Devin Stovall gave up one hit and struck out two to earn the save.

MCU's Tomas Rodriguez (1-3) allowed four runs, two earned, on nine hits to take the loss. He walked four and struck out two.

Cumberland's offense was totally inept in the second game against MCU's Hunter Burge, registering just four hits and six total baserunners in the contest. CU did not have a player reach third base in the game and only once did the Bulldogs have more than one baserunner in an inning and that came after Burge intentionally walked Mandarino in the sixth.

Burge (3-0) struck out six and threw just 107 pitches for the complete game victory, snapping a 14-game winning streak for Cumberland against the Cougars (5-14, 1-1).

Keith Kirby (1-2) again came out on the short end of a great performance, giving up an unearned run and four hits with one walk and two strikeouts in six innings. The righthander lowered his earned-run-average to 0.35 in 25.2 innings of work, but the Bulldogs have scored just four total runs in his last three starts, leading to two losses and a no decision.

The Bulldogs scored in the second inning of the opener when Ross beat out an infield single, went to second on a balk and scored on Antonio Butler's single through the leftside.

Richard Arias and Cable McMinn both singled to leadoff the fourth for the Cougars and Drew Bennett moved the runners up with a sacrifice bunt. Arias scored on a groundout by pinch-hitter Dylan Rasch, tying the game at one.

CU got the run back in the fifth when Cory Urquhart walked and Lind singled with one out. Mandarino's double down the leftfield line plated Urquhart for a 2-1 edge.

The Bulldogs added two insurance runs in the sixth after Ross singled to leadoff and Tyler Alford reached on an error by Arias on a sacrifice attempt. Butler's sac bunt pushed the runners to second and third and Lind plated two runs with a two-out triple down the rightfield line for a 4-1 lead.

Lind, Mandarino and Ross each collected two hits in the game, while Ross and Urquhart each scored twice and Lind drove in a pair of runs.

In the second game neither team had more than one baserunner in an inning until the bottom of the fourth when McMinn singled up the middle with one out and went to second on a wild pitch. Pinch-runner Uriel Hawkins scored when Josh McGee's throw to first was wild on a grounder by Jordan Manney, giving the Cougars a 1-0 edge.

CU's best chance came in the sixth after McGee doubled with two outs and Mandarino drew the free pass, but Nick Sydnor popped out to end the inning. In the seventh Richie Seaton singled with one out and stole second, but pinch-hitter Daniel Harrison popped out and Butler struck out to end the game.