The Meridian Community College Eagles opened play in the 2015 Rush Invitational Tournament at Scaggs Field on Friday afternoon against Jefferson College (MO) under very brisk conditions. MCC came away with a doubleheader split (8-6, 3-7) against the visiting Vikings to open the annual tournament on Friday. The Eagles moved to 3-3 overall with the doubleheader split, while Jefferson College moved its 2015 record to 1-1. MCC will not return to action until February 18 for a road trip at Wallace-Selma. The road doubleheader is set for a 3 p.m. start in Selma, AL next Wednesday.

The Rush Invitational Tournament will continue on Saturday with three games at Scaggs Field featuring Jefferson, Jones County Junior College, and Wallace-Hanceville. The action will begin at 11 a.m. as Jefferson and Jones will take to the field followed by a 1:30 contest between Jefferson and Wallace-Hanceville. The final game of the day will feature Jones taking on Wallace-Hanceville at 4 p.m.

MCC came out firing on all cylinders at the plate in Game One to defeat Jefferson by a final score of 8-6. The Eagles got on the board first as sophomore Goose Yates bashed his first homer of the season in the bottom of the second inning to give MCC a 2-0 lead. Jefferson College responded with four runs in the top of the fourth inning, but MCC would quickly answer in the bottom half of the frame. The Eagles answered with six runs in the bottom of the fourth inning to take an 8-4 lead over the visiting Vikings.

The inning was highlighted by a pair two-run doubles by Jared Savell and Dalton Thomas to give MCC the lead for good. Sophomore Bryant Johnston picked up the pitching win in relief and Dustin Smith picked up the save for the Eagles. Smith worked three solid innings in relief for the Eagles and collected four strikeouts.

MCC finished Game One with 7 hits overall and Jefferson College had 10 hits in the loss. Scott Votaw and Goose Yates each had two hits in the game, while Kyle Bayles added a single. Josh Abegg, Caleb Hicks, and Brady Newland each had a pair of hits in the game for Jefferson.

The Vikings were able to bounce back in Game Two to secure a 7-3 victory over the Eagles. MCC managed nine hits in Game Two, while Jefferson had 10 hits in its first victory of 2015. Jaylon Keys, Dalton Thomas, and Daniel Hill each had two hits in the loss for MCC. Caleb Hicks led the charge in Game Two for the Vikings with three hits and Matt Brown also added a pair of hits for Jefferson.

Former West Lauderdale star Ryan Lane suffered the tough loss on the mound by working five innings and notching 10 strikeouts. Freshman Anthony Herron picked up his first collegiate win on the mound for the Vikings by working six strong innings and collecting seven strikeouts.