

Gunn Nets 29 in 87-77 Win Over UT Martin

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. --

Junior Tommy Gunn posted a career high 29 points as Middle Tennessee (1-2) gave head coach Kermit Davis his first Blue Raider win with an 87-77 victory over visiting UT Martin (2-1).

The Skyhawks jumped out to an 11-2 lead in the first four minutes of the game, but the Blue Raiders roared back behind Gunn's stellar first half effort to finally take a one-point lead at the 7:48 mark behind a Napoleon Rhodes layup.

The Blue Raiders would lead by as many as five before the first stanza ended, but UT Martin battled back to take a two-point lead on a Jeremy Kelly jumper with :39 left.

Gunn again took control and drilled a trey to put the Blue Raiders up one and then produced a defensive steal

and a transition basket to send the Blue Raiders into the locker room with a three point advantage.

The Blue Raiders would continue their good play as the second half got underway. Middle Tennessee put together an 8-0 run to jump out to an 11-point lead early in the second half and seemed to have the game under control.

However, the Skyhawks would make another run. The visitors would pull within three on four occasions in the final frame, but the Blue Raiders continued to thwart their comeback efforts while hanging on for the win.

Gunn, who connected on 10-of-13 shots on the night including five-of-six from 3-point range, led all scorers. William Pippen tallied a season-high 15 points, while Humphrey added 13 and Marcus



Robinson provided his first double-figure scoring game with 10. Humphrey led the Blue Raiders on the boards with eight.

UT Martin got a 26-point night from Earl Bullock, and Okechi Egbe and Joey Walker netted 13 each.

The Blue Raiders will return to action on Saturday night in Greensboro, NC, against 2002 NIT participant UNC-Greensboro. Tip off is slated for 6 PM.

DAVIS, BLUE RAIDERS GET FIRST WIN: Tonight's 87-77 victory over Tennessee-Martin marked the first win by new Head Coach Kermit Davis and the first of the season for the Blue Raiders. Davis is now 138-75 for his coaching career.

STRONG ON THE BOARDS ... AGAIN: The Blue Raiders continued their improvement in the rebounding department by owning the boards against UT-Martin, 43-34. For the season, Middle Tennessee owns a +5 margin on the boards, including a +8.5 margin over the past two games.

GUNN EXPLODES: Junior Tommy Gunn poured in a career-best 29 points on 10-for-13 shooting in the win over UT-Martin. Gunn's previous high was 27 points against New Mexico State last season. Gunn, who has now scored 20 or more points five times in his career, also connected on a personal-best five three-pointers.

TEAM SEASON-HIGH: The Blue Raiders hit a season-best eight three-pointers tonight on 18 attempts. It ranks as their most treys in a game since connecting on 10 against Western Kentucky last season - a span of six games.

HUMPHREY SETS CAREER HIGHS: Senior John Humphrey enjoyed a solid game for the Blue Raiders as he set career-bests in rebounds and steals. The Swansboro, NC, native registered eight rebounds and four steals to go along with 13 points. In his two home games this year, Humphrey is averaging 14.5 points and 7.5 rebounds.

SCHEDULE REMINDER: The Blue Raiders' next home game is scheduled for December 4 at 7 PM against Tennessee Tech. On some earlier schedules, the date was listed as December 3, but it was later changed to the 4th.

NEXT UP: The Blue Raiders will hit the road for a Saturday game against UNC-Greensboro. Tipoff is scheduled for 6 PM. The Spartans are a member of the Southern Conference and are coming off a 20-11 season.

TIDBITS: The Blue Raiders have now hit at least one three-pointer in 190 consecutive games ... William Pippen scored a season-high 15 points ... Middle Tennessee's 15 assists were a season-high ... The Blue Raiders shot a season-high 53.6 percent from the field. It was also their best shooting game since making 58.2 percent of their shots against IUPUI-Fort Wayne last season - a span of 12 games.

QUOTES

MT Head Coach Kermit Davis: "Obviously, it feels good to get our first win of the year. It was a

good win. It was good for our team. We needed this win. Tonight, we beat a quality opponent."

"I liked the 45 [points] at the half. We were good in transition tonight. We kept the floor spaced and we took care of the ball offensively."

On Tommy Gunn

"He was fantastic. His motor ran all game. When the offense broke down, he made plays on his own. He put the offense on his back."

MT Forward William Pippen: "Any kind of win feels good. It feels great to go out there and get Coach Davis his first win on our home court."

"We took advantage of their smaller post men."

MT Guard Marcus Robinson: "It feels good. We got the monkey off our back and got our first win on our court."

"Coach [Davis] wasn't too happy about the defense [at the half], but he was happy with our offense. When you can bring in two or three guys who can play different positions, it is good for the subs. You always have fresh bodies in the game."

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