Murray State Knocks Off MT 76-64

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MURRAY, Ky. -- Middle Tennessee (4-8) didn't get the New Year off to the start that it had hoped for, falling to Murray State (7-3) 76-64 on New Year's Day.

The Blue Raiders got off to a fairly quick start in the game, leading 7-4 following a William Pippen layup at 17:49 in the first half.

The lead would prove to be short lived, however, as the Racers roared back, eventually building a seven-point advantage at 16-9 after a 12-2 run was capped with a Kevin Paschel trey at 13:22 in the first half.

The Racers would continue to control the pace of the game, leading by as many as 14 in the opening frame.

After seeing Murray State take a 45-32 lead into the locker room at the half, the Blue Raiders came out looking like an inspired ball club. The team went on an 11-2 run and cut the lead to 47-43 to open the second stanza, keyed by treys from John Humphrey and Keith Connor.

The Racers would recover from the opening flurry and eventually regain control of the game. In fact, Murray State would rebuild the lead to as many as 15 points before closing out the game with the 12-point victory.

John Humphrey led all scorers with 19 points, all coming behind his 6-of-11 night from behind the 3-point arc. Keith Connor also added 12 points to the scoring effort. Eric Parham continued his strong play at the point for the Blue Raiders, dishing out 11 assists with only three turnovers in the game.

Three Racers posted double figures, with Cuthbert Victor and Chris Shumate leading the way with 18 each.

The Blue Raiders will return to action on Saturday, Jan. 4 with a home game against Western

Kentucky. Not only will the game tip off conference action for the Blue Raiders, it will also celebrate the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Murphy Center. The game is slated to begin at 7 PM.

NOTES

Humphrey Hot: Guard John Humphrey connected on six three-pointers against Murray State, leaving him only two treys shy of his own school record of eight. Humphrey's eight treys came in last season's game at Western Kentucky. His six treys tonight tie him for seventh on the all-time single game list.

Parham Dishes it Out: Guard Eric Parham reached 11 assists for the Blue Raiders tonight, making him the first MT player to reach double figures in that category this season. Parham's 11 assists equal his career best, which he had accomplished on two other occasions.

A First on the First: The Blue Raiders' game against Murray State on Jan. 1 marks the first time in school history that MT has played a game on New Year's Day.

Layups: Tonight's game marks the first time this season that both Tommy Gunn and William Pippen have been held below double figures ... Keith Connor got a start tonight after coming off the bench in the last four games ... The Blue Raiders were outrebounded for only the fourth time this season against the Racers.

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