Bailey Breaks Out In Lady Raider Win

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CARBONDALE, Ill. - Red shirt freshman Cartia Bailey had a break-out game scoring a career-high 18 points to help lead Middle Tennessee (11-9) to a 87-63 win over Southern Illinois (4-12) Tuesday in SIU arena.

Bailey's 18 points is the first time in her career she has scored in double figures. She also connected on a career-high two three-point shots and played a career-high 28 minutes.

"I see myself as the spark plug of the team," Bailey said. "I take my job seriously."

Middle Tennessee's 87 points was the first time the Lady Raiders have scored 80 or more points since January 9 when MT scored 80 against Arkansas State. Sophomore guard Patrice Holmes' 20 points marks the first time she has scored 20 or more points since the same Arkansas State game.

In was also a career night for Jennifer Justice who scored 18 points and sophomore Ciara Gray who poured in 10 points. Forward Eboni Kirby also quietly had a solid night as she scored 10 points.

Overall the Lady Raiders shot 56.5 percent from the field and 66.7 from the free throw line. Middle Tennessee only committed 15 turnovers and forced 25 Southern Illinois turnovers.

"We really needed a win on the road to build our confidence," said Head Coach Stephany Smith. "I was really pleased with our energy in the second half."

Middle Tennessee led 41-36 at the half, shooting 50 percent from the field and 63.6 from the free throw line. Southern Illinois went on a 6-0 run in the final three minutes of the half to pull within five and stayed in the game by hitting 10-of-10 from the free throw line.

The Lady Raiders continue their three-game road swing when the team travels to Miami, Florida to take on Florida International. Tip-off in the Sun Belt Conference match-up begins at 1 p.m.

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