Smith Picks Up 100th in Lady Raider Win

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee (13-10, 6-4 SBC) head Coach Stephany Smith picked up her 100th win in the Lady Raiders thrilling 67-65 win over Denver (12-12, 6-4 SBC) on Saturday in Murphy Center. It was the first win in four tries for the Lady Raiders over Denver.

With the score tied at 65, Patrice Holmes drove in for a lay-up with three seconds left to play to give the Lady Raiders the win. In the last minute and half of the game, Holmes accounted for six of Middle Tennessee's points.

Leading by five with 6:16 left to play, Middle Tennessee watched Denver go on a 5-0 run to tie the game 57-57 with 4:22 left to play. In a four minute span there were five lead changes and three ties. It was the third time this season Middle Tennessee came back to win a game when the Lady Raiders trailed at the half.

Holmes led all scorers with 20 points and added seven rebounds. Jennifer Justice followed Holmes with 16 points and added four rebounds in 23 minutes of work. Freshman Tia Stovall picked up her first start since returning to the line-up and snagged 11 rebounds and poured in nine points.

Middle Tennessee returns to the road on next week to take on Arkansas State and Arkansas-Little Rock on Thursday and Saturday.

Notes

Smith for 100: Lady Raider head coach Stephany Smith got her 100th career victory in the 67-65 Middle Tennessee win over Denver.

Trice to the Rescue: Sophomore Patrice Holmes took over the game for the Lady Raiders in the

final two minutes with her team down four. Holmes scored six of the final eight points for her team and assisted on the other basket, including the final bucket with three seconds left on the clock. She had 11 of her 20 points in the second half.

Stovall Back in the Lineup: Freshman Tia Stovall drew her first start since her return from injury. It was Stovall's fourth start of the year and her first since December 22 against Lipscomb. She pulled down 11 rebounds and scored nine points in only 23 minutes. The 11 boards tied her season-high set earlier this year against Memphis.

The Thief Continues to Climb: Sophomore Patrice Holmes continues to climb the list for steals in a season, swiping five more in the victory. Holmes now has 76 steals this season, tying Alice Lawrence, Eva Lemeh and Cortney Neeley for third on the single-season list.

This 'N That: The Lady Raiders improved to 9-3 overall at home this season, 5-1 in the Sun Belt ... Middle Tennessee improved to 2-2 this season in games decided by five points or less ... The Lady Raiders got their first-ever win over Denver in the two-point win, improving to 1-3 overall against the Pioneers, 1-0 at Murphy Center ... Redshirt freshman Cartia Bailey drew her third straight start ... Keisha McClinic tied her season-high for minutes played with 34 ... Paula Penttila tied her season-high for field goals made with four ... Patrice Holmes tied her career-high with 22 field goals attempts and played the entire 40 minutes for the 10th time this season ... Eboni Kirby made a three-pointer for the fourth time this year.

Quotes

MT Head Coach Stephany Smith: "[Patrice Holmes] had a really good game tonight, obviously down the stretch. We knew [Ashley Atkinson] was going to take their last shot, and they knew Patrice was going to take our last shot. I really thought we fought awfully hard, and got a monkey off our back. As far as Denver is concerned, they are a very good basketball team. They have a great backcourt player and great shooters. We have lost to them several times. For us to come out with that win, when they made every shot they needed to make in order to win is huge."

On getting her 100th victory
"That is a great accolade to have. I hope to go past two and three [hundred] and on beyond. I don't plan on getting out of this racket anytime in the near future. You can't give me any of that credit. It is for the rest of the coaches and players that come here and commit themselves to this program. I just happen to be the one holding the reigns."

MT Guard Patrice Holmes: "My teammates look at me as leader, and they instill confidence in me. So, I just took whatever the defense gave me."

"I think Jennifer Justice did a great job of hitting a big shot down the stretch. I think [Atkinson] is a very good player. We just wanted to contain her and not let her get any open three point shots."

MT Forward Mia Parviainen: "We knew that Coach Smith had 99 wins, and we tried to fight hard to get her that 100th win."

"It was pretty physical. They have good three point shooters. We had to fight through their screens

and be aware, but they still knocked down the threes."

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