UALR Ends MT's Win Streak 74-58

February 16, 2003 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee saw its five-game winning streak come to an end with a 74-58 loss to Arkansas-Little Rock in the team's final home game of the year.

Middle Tennessee jumped out to a 14-8 lead in the first half behind a six-point spurt from William Pippen to start the game. However, the Trojans rallied to take a 17-14 advantage after a 6-0 run capped by a trey from Nick Zachery, who finished a game-high 22.

After taking a 39-34 deficit to the locker room at intermission, the Blue Raiders cut the lead to 43-42 following an Eric Parham jumper. The Blue Raiders got a stop on defense, but Pippen missed a dunk and Zachery put the game out of reach with three consecutive treys.

The Blue Raiders would cut the lead to five on three occasions during the second half, but could draw no closer to UALR for the remainder of the game.

Pippen's 20-point effort led the Blue Raiders, while Napoleon Rhodes added 15 points, just one shy of his career best.

Jibrahn Ike scored 14 and Kimmo Muurinen added 11 in the UALR effort.

RHODES HAS BIG GAME: Center Napolean Rhodes turned in one of his better performances of the year with 15 points on a perfect 4-for-4 shooting to go along with five rebounds. Rhodes, who recorded his most points since getting 16 against UNC-Greensboro, connected on 7 of 8 free throws.

STREAK BROKEN: Middle Tennessee saw its five-game winning streak come to an end with the loss to UALR on Saturday. It also marked the first loss for MT in the month of February.

SENIOR NIGHT: Middle Tennessee said farewell to five Blue Raider seniors during a pregame ceremony tonight. John Humphrey, Bryant Mitchell, Eric Parham, William Pippen, and Demario Watson all played their final home game against UALR.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED: During the second half of tonight's basketball game, two current Blue Raider athletes were awarded scholarships. Football player Kevin Pascoe (Palmetto, FL) and

volleyball standout Jennifer Hignite (Versailes, KY) were both presented the Johnny "Red" Floyd Scholarship for the current academic year.

THIS 'N' THAT: Middle Tennessee was outrebounded tonight for the first time in seven games ... MT has hit at least one three-pointer in 212 consecutive games ... The UALR bench dominated the Blue Raiders on Saturday to the tune of 36-3 ... UALR made more free throws tonight (22) than the Blue Raiders attempted (19) ... William Pippen topped the 20-point mark for the eighth time in his career after finishing with 20 points in his home finale against UALR.

MT Head Coach Kermit Davis: "I thought that all the things that we have been doing when our team has been playing well, defending and rebounding, they were just better at it than we were tonight. They were a tougher team. We have been giving up 39 percent from the field. We gave up nearly 50 [percent] from the two, 56 [percent] from the three, and we got out rebounded by 14. That is the game in a nutshell. On this particular night, their perimeter players were just a lot better than our perimeter players. Our four and five did well until the end when the one kid who hadn't played very much just took over the game. That was it. The biggest thing was the defending and rebounding. They were just tougher in the perimeter. When you get out rebounded by 14 and give up nearly 50 [percent from the field], you are not going to win many games."

MT Forward William Pippen: "Tonight, they were the tougher team. We didn't come out in the second half and assert ourselves like we usually do. We didn't play good at all in the second half. I think those last 10 minutes really took it out on us and proved to be the tougher team. We missed a lot of easy shots. John [Humphrey] missed a lay-up, and Eric [Parham] missed a lay-up. I missed a dunk. They played great defense. I am not taking anything away from them. Normally, we knock down some of those shots that we missed tonight."

MT Forward Napoleon Rhodes: "Like [Pippen] said and like Coach [Davis] said, we weren't tough like we usually are in other games. Kimmo [Muurinen] came in for the last five or 10 minutes and got every ball when we should have gotten those loose balls that was right in our hands."

UALR Head Coach Porter Moser: "I was proud of our guys on how they played through adversity. In the second half at Western Kentucky, we didn't play like we can. We have been on the road. We had a couple of guys that couldn't play injury wise. During the last 48 hours, we had a lot of meetings in hotels, a lot of film sessions. I was just really proud of how we reacted coming back from adversity. That is the best effort we have had in terms of moving the ball around, and not caring how shot but caring that it was an open shot. A great time for that to start happening is mid-February."

Printed on March 12, 2014
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/1728