Pippen Leads MT to 80-70 Win at FIU

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PIPPEN HAS BIG NIGHT: William Pippen equaled his career high with 32 points in Middle Tennessee's road win over FIU on Saturday night. Pippen was 13-of-17 from the field including 4-of-5 from behind the 3-point arc. The game marks the second time this season that the Hamburg, Ark., native has eclipsed the 30-point plateau this season.

NO WORSE THAN SECOND: MT's win over Florida International combined with UALR's loss to UL-Lafayette gives Middle Tennessee at least second place in the East Division of the Sun Belt. Middle Tennessee could play for first place in the season finale at Western Kentucky if the Hilltoppers drop next Tuesday's contest against the Ragin' Cajuns.

GUNN ONE AWAY: Tommy Gunn scored 17 points against FIU, leaving him only one point shy of the 1,000 point mark for his career. Should Gunn score again this season, he will become the 26th player in school history to reach the millennium milestone.

SEASON HIGHS: Aside from William Pippen's personal career-high tonight, the Blue Raiders established two season bests as a team. Middle Tennessee's 59.5 percent from the field bettered the team's previous high of 58.7 percent against Western Kentucky. The team's 61.5 percent from behind the 3-point arc also established a new season high. The team's previous best was 56.2 percent against IPFW.

STOKES WATCHES WIN: Former Blue Raider basketball coach and current Miami resident Dr. Bill Stokes was on hand for tonight's game between MT and FIU. Stokes was on the sidelines from 1962-65 before heading south. Stokes spent around 25 years as the president of Miami-Dade Community College before retiring.

THIS AND THAT: The Blue Raiders' win at FIU gives the team four road wins in the league and ensures that the team will finish above .500 in SBC away contests ... Tommy Gunn equaled his

career-high with five assists ... The team's 18 assists equaled a career high ... Keith Connor missed tonight's game with a sprained ankle, marking the first game this season that the Pflugerville, Texas, native has not seen action in a contest ... Middle Tennessee's ticket office has tickets available for MT's game at Western Kentucky. Interested parties should call 1-888-YES-MTSU to purchase tickets.

HEAD COACH KERMIT DAVIS: "We played awfully well tonight. We played about as well as we have all year in stretches, especially offensively. We executed our set plays really well and I think that our assist-to-turnover ratio was pretty good. William Pippen was just outstanding tonight."

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