

November 10, 2006

## Women Fall in Thriller to No. 1 Maryland, 80-76

Record crowd of 10,010 see Blue Raiders fall in final minute against defending national champions

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**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** - Middle Tennessee's [Amber Holt](#) scored 28 points and freshman [Chelsia Lymon](#) added 15 off the bench, but it wasn't quite enough, as top-ranked Maryland escaped Murphy Center with a final-minute victory, 80-76, Friday night before a record crowd of 10,010.

The Blue Raiders (0-1) overcame a 15-point first-half deficit to take an early lead in the second period. For the rest of the game neither team led by more than five, with five lead changes and one tie over the last 20 minutes.

Holt, in her first game as a Blue Raider, kept her club in the contest with 15 first-half points and was 11-for-24 from the field with eight rebounds in the game. Her jumper a minute into the second half gave Middle Tennessee its first lead of the contest at 39-38.

Maryland tallied eight of the next 10 points and pushed the advantage to five. Lymon's two-pointer at 14:18 of the second period again put the Blue Raiders ahead, 53-52.

The Terrapins again led by five after two free throws from Marissa Coleman at 9:51, but Middle Tennessee came right back with a 3-pointer from Holt before Shelbyville native Ashleigh Newman banged in a trifecta of her own the next time down the floor.

Middle Tennessee took its biggest lead of the game with a 10-0 run over two minutes at 7:15, including a bucket from Holt, a put-back by [Lakira Boyd](#), and six straight points from Lymon, a 3-pointer and a razzle-dazzle 360-spin lay-up and foul.

But the defending national champions would not wilt, answering with eight straight points of their own to reclaim the lead. Coleman, who ended the contest with 19 points and a game-high 15 rebounds, hit a jumper, Crystal Langhorne had a put-back and Kristi Tolliver, who spent most of the first half on the bench with foul trouble, buried a step-back trifecta.

Still, Lymon knocked down another jumper and after a Maryland free throw, the Blue Raiders had a chance to tie the contest with a minute to go. After a scramble freshman [Brandi Brown](#) missed a baseline jumper with the shot clock about the expire, but senior [Chrissy Givens](#), who had 14 points, seven assists and three steals, swooped in for the rebound and just as she was falling down, found [Krystle Horton](#) for a lay-up on the other side of the basket.

Unfortunately Horton's shot would not fall and Maryland came down with the rebound. Langhorne had another put-back, two of her 16 points and 11 rebounds, and Shay Doron hit two free throws to put UMD ahead by six.

[Starr Orr](#) had a put-back at the buzzer for Middle Tennessee for the final score of 80-76.

Maryland controlled much of the first half, leading 36-23 at the three-minute mark before the Blue Raiders scored 10 of the final 12 points of the period, including 15 from newcomer Holt. Givens had 10 in the first half as well, including a driving layup at the buzzer to pull the Blue Raiders within five at 38-33.

Middle Tennessee returns to action Monday, hosting South Dakota State at 5 p.m. at Murphy Center in a doubleheader with the Blue Raider men.

### POSTGAME NOTES

**BLUE RAIDERS SET ATTENDANCE RECORD:** The crowd of 10,010 on hand for the Blue Raiders-Terrapins game is a new single-game attendance record for women's basketball at Middle Tennessee. The previous single-game high was 4,813 set against Western Kentucky in the championship game of the 2006 Sun Belt Conference Tournament.



Newcomer Amber Holt scored a game-high 28 points and grabbed eight rebounds in Middle Tennessee's 80-76 defeat to top-ranked Maryland Friday night at Murphy Center. (Adam Braden)

**GIVENS MOVES INTO TOP 10:** With three steals against No. 1 ranked Maryland, senior [Chrissy Givens](#) moved into the Top 10 on the all-time list. Givens tied Jamie Thomatis (1998-2002) for 10th place with 191 career steals and now needs just four steals to overtake Priscilla Robinson for ninth place.

**NICE OPENING ACT:** Transfer [Amber Holt](#) made a nice debut in her first game as a Blue Raider and showed she will be a player to be reckoned with in 2006-07. Holt, from Duluth, Ga., scored 28 points on 11 of 24 shooting and pulled down eight rebounds to pace the Blue Raiders. Holt also added two steals and two assists.

**DISHING IT OUT:** Dating back to her last three games of the 2005-06 season, [Chrissy Givens](#) has been dishing the rock to her teammates at an alarming rate. With a game-high seven assists against Maryland tonight, Givens has 35 assists in her past four games for an average of 8.8 per game. For her career, Givens has 289 assists and is just 45 away from moving into the Top 10 at Middle Tennessee.

**FRESHMAN SHINES:** In her first live action at the collegiate level, true freshman [Chelsia Lymon](#) shined on one of college basketball's biggest stages. The Georgetown, Ky., native did not play against Henderson State in the team's exhibition due to an ankle injury, but made the most of her minutes tonight against No. 1 ranked Maryland. Lymon scored 13 points on 5-for-7 shooting in just nine minutes of action and all of her points came during the eight minutes she played in the second half. The point guard also added a steal while making 2-of-3 three-pointers.

**QUICK HITTERS:** Nov. 10 is the earliest starting date ever for the Middle Tennessee program ... [Chrissy Givens](#) hit double figures in scoring for the 85th time of her career and played all 40 minutes for the 17th time as a Blue Raider ... The Blue Raiders were outshot at the free throw line in the second half, 16 to 3 ... Middle Tennessee saw its 12-game home winning streak come to an end with the loss to Maryland ... MT is now 21-11 in home openers and 19-13 in season openers ... The Blue Raiders played 12 total players in tonight's game, while Maryland played nine ... The Blue Raiders played three true freshman, including [Brandi Brown](#) who earned a start.

#### **Middle Tennessee coach Rick Insell**

##### **On having the opportunity to win at the end**

"You see why they are national champions. [Ashleigh] Newman hits a three and then [Kristi] Toliver backs us down and hits a three. They did the same thing in the [NCAA] finals last year against Duke. We worked to prevent that, but they've got great players. They didn't luck into being national champions. They are very deserving and a good basketball team. I am very proud of my team."

##### **On trailing by 15 early and coming back and playing all out**

"With this bunch, we knew we were going to be a little shaky. We are young and we really wanted to get everyone a chance to play. We really don't know each other well. Amber and Chrissy are learning to play together. We've got along way to go and this is a great first game. The crowd was great, we really appreciate the support. I'm in a win-win situation."

##### **On Maryland having 23 turnovers**

"We got tired. We had to get out of our press. We were giving up too much down the floor. Their two post players run like 5-foot-6 guards. I've never seen anyone run like they can run. Maybe if we had pressed a little more and been in a little bit better physical condition, we might have been able to do a little more damage."

##### **Does this show where Middle Tennessee can be in the near future with the competitiveness of the game and the great crowd?**

"Absolutely. I've said this all along. But, we are going to have to take care of business in the Sun Belt Conference and then people around the country are going to see that we are a good basketball team. We have to go to Georgia, Tennessee, Old Dominion and Minnesota, but we are not going to quit or surrender. That's our attitude."

##### **Would you like to play Maryland again later in the season?**

"No, I hope they are opposite of us all the way through. I'm being honest"

##### **On the play and contribution of the freshman players**

"We wanted to play them all and see how they would react. [Chelsia Lymon](#) had 13 points, [Jackie Pickel](#) had a big three, [Brandi Brown](#) was a little bit shaky, but she is going to be fine. All of our freshmen are going to be fine. We have some other players. [Lakira Boyd](#) had two good put-backs that pulled us back. There were a few breakdowns on defense, but they are the national champions. They've been picked number one already by everybody. I'm real proud of our young ladies. They made plays when they had to make plays. That's what you're supposed to do."

#### **Senior Guard [Chrissy Givens](#)**

##### **On her thoughts of the game**

"The biggest thing is we see where we are at. We are a good ball team. I think we got a little better. We got a little bit better from the Clemson scrimmage, we got better from Henderson State. You could see the heart and passion. We are a little further along than we thought we were. We hung in there with them. We see what we need to work on, so that we can take it to the next level."

##### **On how frustrating it is to get that close to a victory and not be able to finish it off**

"It's frustrating, but I think it's good. Everything happens for a reason. We had a couple of players very disappointed after this game. This could have been a wake-up call for them to break out and come out of their shell."

**Junior Forward [Amber Holt](#)**

**Is this what you envisioned when you signed with Middle Tennessee?**

"Yes, when I signed here I think I made a good decision. This team has a lot of heart. That's where I wanted to go."

**On the level of competition compared to junior college**

"It's a big step. Teams we played at my old school were a little slower and the game was slower."

**Maryland Quotes**

**Maryland Head Coach Brenda Frese**

**Thoughts on the play of Middle Tennessee**

"We want to thank Middle Tennessee because they made us better tonight. That was one of the better college games I ever been apart of. Middle Tennessee is going to be very good. They obviously showed it and they've got to be excited about what's ahead. They made us work for everything. It was a tough a battle, but a tremendous environment. We loved the fans, the energy, and for both teams this game is going to make us better."

**On the play of [Amber Holt](#)**

"We knew obviously about Chrissy [Givens], but we were only aware of Amber's [Holt] stats. That combination is going to be very successful. They are two of the best that are going to get us ready for our league. They definitely could play in our league, they are that talented. They are tremendous."

**On finding rhythm offensively**

"Anytime you have 23 turnovers in a game, you find it tough to find a rhythm. We had a lot of different combinations with foul trouble in the first half and early in the second half. We were forced to play lineups we usually don't play. This environment was a tough environment and it's going to help us down the road."

**On using height advantage**

"We did until we got in foul trouble. I would've liked to have used it more with the fact that Laura Harper and Jade Perry picked up two quick fouls in the second half that really hurt us. You have to adjust, that's part of the game. When we were down four [points] with five minutes to go, being able to get some momentum was key for us."

**Junior Guard Ashleigh Newman**

**Thoughts on facing her high school coach Rick Insell**

"I knew he would have them well prepared to play us. He knew what we were going to do. He prepared his team very well. His team is a great team and he has really prepared them. They are going to do great things this year."

**On coming back to her home state**

"It was a great feeling to come back and get to see them again."

**Junior Forward Crystal Langhorne**

**On how tonight's game will help prepare the team for the season**

"Middle Tennessee is going to prepare us for what's going to come ahead. Every time we go out and play, we know we are going to get everybody's best game."

**Sophomore Guard Marissa Coleman**

**Thoughts on getting team's best effort every game**

"I think we knew we were going to be the hunted, but I don't think we realized what that meant until tonight. We knew they were a great team, but we didn't realize how great of a team they were. They were coming after us for what we did last year."