Raiders Upset No. 8 Georgia, 70-62

Holt, Givens combine for 46 points in road victory

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ATHENS, Ga. - Georgia native Amber Holt scored 21 points, including 15 in the second half, Chrissy Givens netted 25 and the Blue Raiders forced 22 turnovers in posting a monumental victory for the program, 70-62, over eighth-ranked Georgia Thursday night at Stegeman Coliseum. The Blue Raiders fell behind early but took a two-point halftime lead, 33-31. After the break Middle Tennessee turned up the defensive pressure on the Lady Bulldogs and extended the lead to as many as 10 before holding on in the final minutes. "When we got into them [defensively], they started mishandling the ball, so we turned up the pressure on them even more," head coach Rick Insell said. "We got into some foul trouble but we have a lot of depth and the next person was even more aggressive." Holt would not be denied in a return to her homestate, continually taking the ball to the hole and scoring down low. She hit seven buckets in the second half, slashing to the basket and hitting short jumpers for crucial buckets. Middle Tennessee failed to hit its free throws in the final minutes, though, missing 2-of-3 front ends of 1-and-1 opportunities, but Georgia could not capitalize. The Blue Raiders led by 10 more than once in the second half, but Georgia pulled as close as 58-54 with a little more than four minutes remaining. But Holt had five straight points, Givens scored a basket and then Holt scored again to stretch the lead back to seven with under two minutes to play. "I am so proud of our girls. It was a valiant effort," Insell said. "We made some shots down the stretch and Amber and Chrissy just came up big. I'm so proud of our team and their effort and very proud to be a part of this program." Blue Raider Krystle Horton grabbed nine rebounds overall and Middle Tennessee pulled down 15 offensive boards, extending possessions. Georgia's Cori Chambers hit for 23 points to lead the Lady Bulldogs and

Angel Robinson had 10. Middle Tennessee limited All-American Tasha Humphrey to just seven points and six shots in the contest. Despite some early foul trouble and Georgia getting off to a good start, not to mention a cold beginning from the field for the Blue Raiders, Middle Tennessee took a 33-31 lead at halftime. The Lady Bulldogs took an early 7-2 advantage, but a 9-4 run by Middle Tennessee got the visitors back in the game. The Blue Raiders scored just five points over a seven-minute stretch in the middle of the half, but Georgia netted just eight of their own during the Middle Tennessee dry spell. The Blue Raiders shot just 40 percent from the floor in the half, but committed only five turnovers and forced 12 by UGA with the help of seven Middle Tennessee steals. Givens had 13 in the opening 20 minutes on 6-of-10 shooting and seldom-used LaCondra Mason hit a trio of 3-pointers in her six minutes of action. UGA's Chambers also had 13 in the first half. Middle Tennessee returns to action next Thursday, opening Sun Belt Conference action with a 7 p.m. contest at South Alabama in Mobile. The Blue Raiders return home and start a five-game homestand on Sunday, December 17, versus Louisiana-Monroe at 1:30 p.m. **NOTES**

GIVENS' BLOG DEBUTS: Middle Tennessee senior Chrissy Givens' first blog of the season appeared Thursday on the women's basketball page at GoBlueRaiders.com. Givens talks about the beginning of the season and the Blue Raiders' first eight games of the season as well as all of the young players producing for the squad so far this year. Givens will add to the blog every two weeks for the remainder of the season. **POSTGAME NOTES**

GIVENS THE LEADER AGAIN: Senior Chrissy Givens continued her roll in the scoring column, netting 25 points on 10-of-18 shooting from the field in the victory. Givens scored 13 points in the first half and was 4-of-6 from the line in the second half, helping the Blue Raiders to a win over a Top 10-ranked team for the first time in school history. Givens has scored 20-plus points in six of the last seven outings, averaging 24.1 points per outing with 6.6 rebounds, 33 assists and 15 steals. The Blue Raiders are 6-1 in the seven games, with the only loss at fourth-ranked Tennessee. **HOLT RETURNS HOME VICTORIOUS:** Junior Amber Holt returned to her home state and played one of her best games of the season, netting 21 points, including 15 in the second half, along with four rebounds, three assists and four steals. She also helped limit Georgia All-American Tasha Humphrey to only seven points and six shots in the contest while Holt played all 40 minutes. It was Holt's fourth 20-plus point game of the season and second against a ranked opponent after netting 28 versus top-ranked Maryland in the season opener. **TURNOVERS CONTINUE TO TELL THE TALE:** Middle Tennessee has forced opponents into more than 20 turnovers in all but one game this season and continued the trend against Georgia, who committed 22 turnovers in the contest. Opponents are averaging 23.0 turnovers per game this season. The more telling story in the victory may have been the lack of turnovers by the Blue Raiders, who had a season-low nine miscues, five in the first half and four in the second half. Middle Tennessee is averaging 14.1 turnovers per game this season as a team. **HORTON HITS THE BOARDS:** Senior Krystle Horton had a second straight outing with stellar work on the glass, grabbing a game-high nine rebounds in the victory. In the last two games Horton has grabbed 19 rebounds in victories over Austin Peay and No. 8 Georgia. Horton is averaging 5.1 rebounds this season and 5.6 for her career. **TIDBITS:** The Blue Raiders improved to 6-0 when leading at the half this season and 24-3 under head coach Rick Insell ... The win was the fourth away from home this season for Middle Tennessee. The squad posted just five victories away from Murphy Center all of last season ... Freshman Chelsia Lymon played a career-high 23 minutes and had a career-high four steals in the contest. She also tied her career-high with seven FG attempts ... Junior Amber Holt played a career-high 40 minutes and tied a career-high with three assists ... LaCondra Mason, who had played just 52 minutes all season and made just one shot before Thursday's game, was 3-for-3 from behind the arc, all in the first half, for a season-high nine points ... Senior Krystle Horton tallied a season-high three assists and led the Blue Raiders in

rebounding for the 26th time in her career ... Senior Chrissy Givens played all 40 minutes for the sixth time this season. She also tied her season-high with five free throws and set a season-high with seven FT attempts.

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