Avery scores 16 as Blue Raiders roll

Middle Tennessee pounds Martin Methodist, 93-57, in exhibition action

December 9, 2006 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The game didn't count in the standings and the statistics, as impressive as they were, didn't count either; but you couldn't tell it by the way Middle Tennessee players took care of business in a 93-57 win in exhibition action against Martin Methodist Saturday night. Freshman guard Darren Avery led five Middle Tennessee players in double figures with 16 points on the strength of 5-of-8 shooting from the field, including 4-of-6 from 3-point range. In addition to Avery's breakout performance, Desmond Yates (15 points), Theryn Hudson (14 points), Kevin Kanaskie (11 points), and Nigel Johnson (11 points) all tallied double figures as the Blue Raiders rolled up their highest offensive output of the season. Middle Tennessee also proved to be extremely unselfish and shared the ball well, which led to several good looks on the offensive end. Johnson, who has demonstrated outstanding improvement with each game and practice, had nine assists and just two turnovers to lead the unit. The Blue Raiders shot 58 percent for the game and they scorched the nets to the tune of 68 percent (21-of-31) in the second half. Middle Tennessee also shot 52 percent from beyond the 3-point line by knocking down 11-of-21 treys, including 9-of-13 in the second half. Avery and freshman teammate Dino Hair combined to hit 6-of-8 3-pointers in the final 20 minutes. Hair finished with nine points and was 3-of-3 from the field - all 3-pointers. Freshman Jay Ivey also got in on the action with seven points. Middle Tennessee limited Martin Methodist to 36 percent shooting for the game, including just 20 percent in the opening half when the Blue Raiders build a 35-18 advantage. Their dominant second-half offensive outburst put the game out of reach early and

led to a 58-point second-half barrage. The Blue Raiders led 47-29 with 16:32 remaining before going on a 23-10 over the next six minutes to extend the advantage to 70-39 and rolled the rest of the way. Middle Tennessee will return to action next Sunday when it opens Sun Belt Conference play against Louisiana-Monroe. Tipoff is scheduled for 30 minutes following the completion of the women's contest, which is set for 1:30 p.m. **Postgame Quotes**

Middle Tennessee Head Coach Kermit Davis

On the win against Martin Methodist:

"I have to give our guys credit. I thought for exam week, an exhibition game and understanding we should win this game, our guys handled it in a mature way. I think our team is getting better from a maturity and practice standpoint. What we got out of it was just want we wanted. [We needed] Darren Avery to get his head out and shoot the ball. Dino Hair had active minutes tonight and Theryn Hudson had 14 points. We are going to need these guys down the stretch. This game gave them some confidence." **On the play of redshirt freshman forward Desmond Yates:**

"I thought Desmond Yates came out with zero energy. He's got to figure out that he's going to guard (small forwards) all year. I thought he was the only guy [on the team] without any energy. I thought the second half showed his talent level." **On the play of freshman forward Jay Ivey:**

"I was disappointed he didn't' get a rebound. He played a lot of the forward position tonight. Jay Ivey is going to be a good player for us. We had to make a decision earlier in the year if we are going to make him like Kyle Young and have him be great by his fifth year. I think it is a great NCAA rule that you can play in the exhibition game and still decide about your redshirt." **On the play of sophomore guard Nigel Johnson:**

"I think Nigel [Johnson] is getting more comfortable. He gets himself in a little bit trouble penetrating. We need his bursts. We need to score more in transition. I think he did a good job sharing the ball."

On the play of redshirt freshman forward Dino Hair:

"Dino [Hair] is a good player. He was playing so well for us last year. When we went to Ole Miss, he played his tail off. He got hurt in a freak thing in our press. It takes a long time for kids to get over this ACL surgery. It's over a year, but he's not there yet. We knew when we recruited him what kind of player he was going to be. He can shoot the ball, he's good off the dribble and he made a couple of good post passes to Theryn Hudson." On coaching against Martin Methodist head coach Jason Ficca: "Jason [Ficca] was on the staff [at Idaho] when I got the job the second time. [Before the season began], he took a head junior college job. I was going to retain him on my staff. He's a really good guy. Jason [Ficca] is doing a good job." **Freshman Guard Darren Avery**

On his performance verse Martin Methodist:

"This was the first time I've gotten to score like I did tonight since I played in high school. It felt good." **On his 3-point shooting:**

"I took extra shots in practice. I have tried to get extra work in. I think it helped a little." **Sophomore Center Theryn Hudson**

On what the team wanted to work on in tonight game against Martin Methodist

"We wanted to red the post and apply full court pressure." **On his play in the second half:**

"When I see everyone playing good, it gets me excited. Sometimes it takes me a few minutes at the start of games to get into the flow but when I do I feel like I am able to help the team." **Senior Forward Kyle Young**

On Middle Tennessee's young talent:

"It is exciting to see everyone play. You want to them develop. Darren [Avery] scored 16 points and Dino [Hair] knocked down three 3-pointers. This will help as a confidence booster later on in the season." **On Middle Tennessee going in conference schedule:**

"We are ready for conference to start. I think we are ahead of where we usually are. We have been

known in the past as a late bloomer. I think we are ahead of where we were last year. We still have a lot of thing to work on."

Printed on May 22, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/22985