Raiders Drain 16 3-pointers in 103-59 Victory

Five players hit for double-figures

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee hit 16 3-pointers in the game, shot 58 percent from the field and forced 27 turnovers, turning them into 35 points, en route to a 103-59 victory over Louisiana-Monroe Sunday afternoon at Murphy Center. Monroe native Chrissy Givens led all scorers with 19 points, one of five Blue Raiders in double figures in the game. Middle Tennessee (8-3, 2-0 Sun Belt) started fast and never looked back in the contest, as point guard Johnna Abney four 3-pointers in the first six minutes of the game and the Blue Raiders raced to a 22-6 advantage with 14:10 remaining in the first half. The Blue Raiders scorched the nets at 67 percent in the first half and knocked down eight 3-pointers for a 61-21 lead at the break. Amber Holt, Givens and Abney each scored 12 points in the half and Middle Tennessee forced 20 turnovers in the first 20 minutes for the second straight game. The Blue Raiders stretched the lead to as many as 50 midway through the second half and continued its stellar shooting performance, especially from behind the arc, hitting 16-of-27 trifectas in the contest. Givens scored 19 with six rebounds and seven assists in 30 minutes of action, while Amber Holt netted 14 points, Abney and Jackie Pickel both added 12, and Brandi Brown had 10. Pickel also hit four 3-pointers in the game and Brown had a pair. Middle Tennessee's 103 points in the game was the most scored by a Blue Raider team since February 19, 1996, against Morehead State (108 points). Middle Tennessee returns to the court Tuesday at 7 p.m., hosting Old Dominion. **NOTES**

$1 TICKETS, TEDDY BEAR TOSS SET FOR OLD DOMINION GAME: The Middle Tennessee

marketing department is sponsoring "Hoop and Holler for a Dollar" for the Blue Raiders contest against Old Dominion on Tuesday, December 19. All tickets for the contest are $1 and may be purchased by calling the Middle Tennessee ticket office at 615/898-2103 or 1-888-YES-MTSU. Also that evening, fans are encouraged to bring a teddy bear to the game. Make sure and write your name on the tag and at halftime, fans will throw the bears on the court, with the closest one to halfcourt winning a prize. All teddy bears will then be picked up and donated to the "Toys for Tots" Christmas drive. **POSTGAME NOTES**

22 IN A ROW: Middle Tennessee continued its home dominance against Sun Belt opponents with the win over Louisiana-Monroe on Sunday. The Blue Raiders have now won 22 straight games at Murphy Center against SBC competition. The last time Middle Tennessee dropped a conference home game was on February 5, 2004, in double overtime against Western Kentucky. Overall, Middle Tennessee has won 26 of its last 27 home conference games and Rick Insell remained a perfect 11-0 at home during that span. **TOUGH ON HOMETOWN TEAM:** Senior Chrissy Givens, who hails from Monroe, La., gave her hometown team a rude welcoming by filling the stat sheet with 19 points, six rebounds, seven assists and two steals in just 30 minutes. In fact, Givens has never lost to a team from Louisiana during her four years at Middle Tennessee (10-0). **CENTURY MARK:** Middle Tennessee recorded its 25th 100-point game in school history and its first since 1996 in the 103-59 win over Louisiana-Monroe on Sunday. The last time the Blue Raiders topped the 100-point mark was on Feb. 19, 1996, in a 108-75 win over Morehead State. Middle Tennessee is now a perfect 25-0 when scoring 100 or more points in a game. **MOVIN' ON UP:** Chrissy Givens moved up in three career statistical categories following the victory over Louisiana-Monroe. With seven assists against ULM, Givens surpassed Lianne Beck for 10th place on the all-time list to run her career total to 339. The senior also moved out of a tie for fifth place on the all-time steals list with two thefts on Sunday. Givens now has 215 career steals and stands just six back of fourth place Sherry Tucker. Givens also moved up on the all-time field goals made list. With six made shots against ULM, Givens passed Sherry Tucker for ninth place and ran her career total to 541 made field goals. **HOT FROM DOWNTOWN:** Middle Tennessee enjoyed one of its best long-distance shooting games in recent memory in the win over Louisiana-Monroe. The Blue Raiders scorched the nets with 16 3-pointers, the most in a single game at Middle Tennessee since the 1994-95 squad hit a record 18 in a win over Chattanooga. The Blue Raiders also made 59.3 percent (16-of-27) of its trifectas against the Warhawks to shoot better from behind the arc than overall (.581). Eight different players hit a 3-pointer in the contest, with a team-high four coming from both Johnna Abney and Jackie Pickel. **QUICK HITTERS:** Today's game marked the first-ever meeting between Middle Tennessee and Louisiana-Monroe in women's basketball ... Middle Tennessee has now started 2-0 in Sun Belt play three years in a row ... Despite a schedule that has seen the Blue Raiders play three nationally-ranked teams to begin the season, their 8-3 record is the best start to a campaign since the 2003-04 squad went 9-2 after 11 games ... The Blue Raiders improved to 18-3 overall at home under Rick Insell ... Believe it or not, but the 61 first half points by the Blue Raiders did not go down as a school record. That distinction belongs to the 1994-95 team that poured in 68 during the first half against Fairleigh-Dickinson ... Chrissy Givens notched her 60th career double figure scoring game ... Givens equaled her season-high with seven assists for the fourth time this season and second straight outing ... Middle Tennessee is now 8-0 this year when leading at the break ... The Blue Raiders have had at least four players in double figures five times this season ... Senior transfer Whitney Tate scored her first points as a Blue Raider when she nailed a 3-pointer late in the game against ULM ... Starr Orr equaled her career-best with five steals against the Warhawks ... Chelsia Lymon handed out a season-high five assists in Sunday's win over ULM ... Of its 36 field goals, Middle Tennessee had an impressive 26 assists ... Eleven of the 12 Blue Raiders who played made it into the scoring

column against ULM. **POSTGAME QUOTES**

Middle Tennessee Head Coach Rick Insell

"I'm very proud of our ladies. Louisiana-Monroe is a good basketball team, but our press took it out of them early. They got a little discouraged towards the end which took them out of their offense. When a team gets out of their offense and we get into ours, it's tough on teams. Our ladies came out and played hard and did not get involved with their game. That is what we are all about. We do not care about the score. We do want to be ahead at halftime, but we are most concerned about properly executing our offense and sticking to our defensive game plan." **Senior Guard Chrissy Givens**

On Louisiana-Monroe turning the ball over 20 times in the first half

"Defense is one of our main things we focus on. Every night we go out and try to do a little bit better on defense and fix certain things. Our game is finally starting to come together. We are not perfect and we are not where we need to be at the end of the season, but we are starting to read each other, which can make things very dangerous. We look at each other's body language and it is leading to our success." **On the meaning of today's game because she is from Monroe**

"It will mean more to me when it is all over. Right now every game is the same to me. It is just another conference game we have under our belt. Every game is one closer to what we are trying to do." **On Middle Tennessee not being a top 25 team at this point in the season**

"We don't need other people to tell us about us. We know what we do. We pay attention to Middle Tennessee. Last year we missed our opportunity to get an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. We don't want to have to win the Sun Belt in order to get a bid the NCAA Tournament. We want to look pretty when it is time to go to the [NCAA] tournament." **On Johnna Abney's three point shooting**

"That is one of the most energizing things is when she makes the first shot. If she hits her first shot, she is on the rest of the night. For her to hit four 3-pointers in a row, we haven't seen that yet this season. In our first games this season she hasn't even played like to she has today. There is no better time for someone to come around than conference time." **Sophomore Guard Johnna Abney**

On her 3-point shooting versus Louisiana-Monroe

"My job every game it to get the ball to my teammates. But if the first shot is there, I'm going to take it. I just have to shoot it when I'm open." **Louisiana-Monroe head coach Mona Martin**

On the performance of Middle Tennessee

"I think they shot the ball unbelievably. They're inside-out game is strong. They've got the total package." **On the play of Louisiana-Monroe**

"I am very disappointed in how we played. We didn't handle their press at all. We're a pressing team and we should be able to handle it. That part I was very disappointed in. We had a lot of unexcused turnovers. I don't know if we were intimidated or what happened. Truthfully, I'm not sure what happened. I'm not real pleased with that."

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