Blue Raiders suffer another heartbreaker

Fall 64-63 in OT at Austin Peay

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CLARKSVILLE, Tenn. - One of the longest-running rivalries in program history added another climatic finish as Austin Peay used an old-fashioned three-point play with 18 seconds remaining to score a 64-63 overtime win against Middle Tennessee at the Dunn Center Wednesday night.

The Blue Raiders (4-6) had a chance for the win with time running down but Kevin Kanaskie's seven-footer was off the mark. The battle for the rebound went Middle Tennessee's way as the ball went out of bounds off an Austin Peay player under the goal with two seconds remaining. Kanskie's attempt to inbound the ball to either Tim Blue or Kyle Young was picked off as the Governors (4-6) escaped with the win.

"I had a good look at the end of overtime, a very good look, and I couldn't get it to go," said Kanaskie, who led Middle Tennessee with 17 points and six assists. "The play on the inbound was supposed to go to (Blue) but they covered him up, and I tried to get it to (Young). It's a disappointing loss because it's one we feel like we let get away."

In addition to Kanaskie's 17 points, Blue finished with 12, and Young added 11 points and nine rebounds. Reed led all scorers with 21 points.

It is the second consecutive gut-wrenching setback for the Blue Raiders, who dropped a 67-65 decision to Louisiana-Monroe on a last-second shot Sunday afternoon.

"We have to make winning plays at the end of games and this is two straight were we haven't done that," Middle Tennessee Head Coach Kermit Davis said. "We had so many chances and we didn't take advantage. Give Austin Peay credit because they battled back and found a way to make winning plays when it counted."

The Blue Raiders led the entire overtime and took a 61-58 lead on Calvin O'Neil's jumper with 2:30 remaining. Austin Peay tied it 61-61 on Fernandez Lockett's long 3-pointer with 1:01 remaining.

Young turned the game back in Middle Tennessee's favor with two clutch free throws with 36 seconds remaining to give the Blue Raiders a 63-61 lead; however, he fouled Reed on a layup at the other end with 18 ticks remaining on the clock. Reed hit the layup and the free throw to provide the winning margin.

Young also had a chance to potentially win the game at the end of regulation after the Blue Raiders set up a well-designed play to him with the game on the line. Kanaskie fed Young a perfect pass driving to the basket but the layup was off the mark and left Austin Peay the chance to win with 18 seconds remaining. The Blue Raider defense stood firm as Wes Channels misfired on a 3-pointer with three seconds remaining and Kyle Duncan's attempt for a putback was errant.

Middle Tennessee appeared to have the game in hand when O'Neil's basket with 7:51 remaining in regulation staked the Blue Raiders to their largest lead of the game, 50-38. The Governors stepped up the defense and used a 18-3 run over the next 7:15 to take a 56-53 lead with 1:36 remaining. Kanaskie enabled the Blue Raiders to overcome the big run with a 3-pointer at the 1:15 mark to even the score at 56-56. It was Kanaskie's fourth trey of the game, tying his career high.

Middle Tennessee returns to action Saturday when it faces Memphis at noon.

NOTES: The Blue Raiders' 52.2 percent effort from the field in the first half was its third-highest shooting percentage of the opening 20 minutes this season. They shot 72.7 in the first half against Toledo and 55.2 percent in the opening stanza against Tennessee State ... Kyle Young was 7-of-8 from the free-throw line against Austin Peay and connected on seven consecutive from the charity stripe over the last two games - before missing his sixth attempt against the Govs. The seven straight makes are the longest such streak of his career. The seven free throws made against Austin Peay are a new career high for Young... Redshirt freshman Darren Avery made his first career start against Austin Peay and scored a season-high five points... Senior Adam Vogelsberg dressed for the first time this season and participated in pre-game warm-ups.

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