

Women Extend Streak to 13 games

Givens scores 27, Holt 19 in victory

January 18, 2007 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Chrissy Givens scored 27 points and Amber Holt added 19, as 20th-ranked Middle Tennessee fought off a feisty Arkansas State team for a half before pulling away for an 82-54 victory Thursday night at Murphy Center. The win runs the Blue Raiders streak to 13 in a row, tied for the third longest in the nation. Givens and Holt both posted superb lines on the box score, combining for the 46 points as well as 11 rebounds, 10 assists and nine steals. The duo was 17-of-27 from the field and 11 for 14 at the foul line as well. But the story of the game was once again the Blue Raiders (16-3, 8-0 Sun Belt), which forced 37 turnovers in the contest and has created 112 in the last three outings. Middle Tennessee turned the miscues into 38 points. The defense also held the potent ASU scoring combo of Adrienne Davie (16 points) and Rudy Sims (eight points) in check



despite the Indians shooting 69 percent in the first half. Middle Tennessee jumped out early and led 18-9 seven minutes into the contest, with Givens scored six points and Holt five. But Arkansas State (13-7, 7-2) clawed its way back into the game with a 14-5 run thanks for six points by Caroline Starr, tying the contest at 23 with 6:09 to play in the half. The Blue Raiders then outscored ASU, 16-9, the rest of the first half, with Brandi Brown knocking down a trio of 3-pointers during the stretch for a 39-32 Middle Tennessee lead at the break. In the second half the Blue Raiders turned up the defensive pressure, forcing six turnovers before the first media timeout. Middle Tennessee scored 16 points in the paint in the second half, mostly on lay-ups. Junior Starr Orr had a big game defensively, forcing

Sims into nine turnovers and also grabbing six rebounds. And senior Krystle Horton played well against Davie in the post, with the ASU center getting most of her points in the second half after the Indians broke the press. Brown ended the game with 12 points for the Blue Raiders, hitting four 3-pointers, her seventh game this season and fifth in the last six outings with at least four trifectas in the contest. Middle Tennessee hits the road again for a contest Saturday at Arkansas-Little Rock. Tip-off is set for 4:30 p.m. The Blue Raiders return home on Sunday, January 28, to face Louisiana-Lafayette. **NOTES**

AUTOGRAPH SESSION SET FOR JANUARY 28: Fans will have the opportunity to receive autographs from their favorite Middle Tennessee players and coaches after the Blue Raiders take on Louisiana-Lafayette on Sunday, January 28. Game time is set for 2 p.m. and the autograph session will follow the game. **NATIONAL GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORTS DAY UPCOMING:** Middle Tennessee will host the annual Girls and Women in Sports Day on Saturday, February 3, in conjunction with the women's basketball game against South Alabama that begins at 3 p.m. Interested parties may purchase a \$10 that includes a game ticket, a hot dog and a soda. A two-hour clinic prior to the game is also part of the day as well as all of the girls being recognized at halftime of the game. Call the Middle Tennessee Ticket Office at 615/898-2103 or 1-888-YES-MTSU.

POSTGAME NOTES

FORCING THE ISSUE: Middle Tennessee's pressing style of defense has been a disruptive force all season, but it has hit another gear over the past five outings. During that span, the Blue Raiders have forced 176 turnovers for an average of 35.2 miscues per game. After creating a season-high 40 turnovers at New Orleans last Saturday, the Blue Raiders responded with 37 forced turnovers in the win over Arkansas State. **STREAK REACHES 13:** The Blue Raiders ran their winning streak to 13 in a row with Thursday's win over Western Division-leading Arkansas State. The current streak is tied for the second most in school history and stands just two shy of equaling the school record of 15 set by the 1986-87 team. The 13-game winning streak is tied for the third longest nationally behind North Carolina (21) and Duke (19). **25 AND COUNTING:** Middle Tennessee's home dominance of Sun Belt foes continued against Arkansas State, as the Blue Raiders won their 25th in a row versus league foes at Murphy Center. The last time Middle Tennessee dropped a conference home game was February 5, 2004, in double overtime against Western Kentucky. Overall, the Blue Raiders have won 29 of their last 30 home conference games and head coach Rick Insell is a perfect 14-0 at the Glass House against SBC competition. **HORTON MOVES UP:** Senior Krystle Horton started her 97th career game in the win over Arkansas State to move into a tie for 10th place on the all-time list with Cortney Neeley (1996-99). With one more start she will tie Priscilla Robinson for ninth place. It was also the Murfreesboro native's 114th career game played, which ties her with Heather Prater for ninth place all-time. **WHAT A YEAR!:** Middle Tennessee has come into 2007 with a chip on its shoulder and the opposition is paying the price. In six games to start the new year, the Blue Raiders are winning by a margin of 30.8 (185) points per game with the closest outing being 28 points against New Orleans and Arkansas State. Overall, Middle Tennessee has won seven games this year by 30 or more points. **HER 31ST:** Senior Chrissy Givens recorded her best scoring game at home since pouring in 29 points against Chattanooga on November 24 when she netted 27 in the win over Arkansas State (In her last four outings against the Indians, Givens has averaged 25.5 points). The 27 points against ASU marked Givens' 31st 20-point game of her career and her third in the last four games. The Monroe, La., native also added five steals to surpass Keisha McClinic for third place on the all-time list. Givens now has 247 career steals and stands 47 back of second place Kim Webb. **QUICK HITTERS:** With nine free throws against ASU, Chrissy Givens ran her career total to 289 to surpass Jessica Beaty for eighth place on the all-time free throws made list ... With two made 3-pointers against ASU, Johnna Abney ran her career total to an even 100, good enough

to tie Paula Pentilla for ninth place all-time ... Amber Holt notched her 13th straight double figure scoring game in the win over ASU ... Middle Tennessee is now 16-0 this season and 34-4 under Rick Insell when leading at the half ... Amber Holt has three or more steals in four straight games ... Chrissy Givens has 16 steals over the past two games combined. **POSTGAME QUOTES**

Middle Tennessee Head Coach Rick Insell

On the play of Arkansas State

"We did not play intelligent basketball. We are a better team than that. [Arkansas State] was changing to zone, then man, then zone, then man, and we did not pick that up. We were out of sync. That was good strategy on their part and very poor thinking on our part. That is one of the things we really harped on at halftime and I was rather upset about it. We got caught up in the crowd and playing the scoreboard instead of getting in there, turning our offense and recognizing what was going on [during the game]." **On Middle Tennessee's defensive play**

"Defensively we have a lot of lateral quickness and are able to put pressure on the ball against teams. We give up some lay-ups but also get some lay-ups back and get more chances to shoot the basketball. That's our forte and what we are all about. Our defensive pressure is for 94 feet. We are not trying to run any score up; we are trying to play the game and get better at it for when we get into the [NCAA] Tournament." **On his thoughts at halftime**

"I felt good about everything except for our [basketball] IQ because Chrissy [Givens], Amber [Holt], Krystle [Horton] and Brandi [Brown] are all better than that. We were looking around at each other and saying we needed to play the game like we know we can play." **On players from Arkansas State**

"There were two players from Arkansas State that concerned me - Adrienne Davie and Rudy Sims. They are some of the best players not only in our conference but in the whole country and we knew we had to contain them. [Rudy Sims] concerned us a lot. Early on [Ali] Carter hit a couple of 3-pointers. That was big for them." **On Arkansas State Head Coach Brian Boyer**

"They have a class team and a class program. He said at the end of the game that we were doing a lot for our conference, keep it up and he was proud of what we were doing. He has all sorts of class and it doesn't surprise me for him to say that. I did appreciate it and I do appreciate Arkansas State. They have a great team." **Middle Tennessee Senior Guard Chrissy Givens**

On the added pressure of being ranked in the polls

"Personally, I don't think it has added any pressure because our team feels we should be Top 15. We feel it's still all about being able to prove a point. We see teams [in the polls] that we are better than. We are still underdogs in our minds and that is why we go out there with the fight that we do."

On Middle Tennessee's defense in the second half

"We started coming up and reading each other and giving it our all on the defensive end. You have Amber [Holt] and I at the center line and Krystle [Horton] up there. We read our two front people so when they started denying, we knew we had to come up. Our defense is what has been giving everyone problems. If you get past our front lines, you still have [the two guards] sweeping in from behind and Amber and I sitting on the court." **On playing with a large lead**

"I think it's more about having fun. We look at the scoreboard sometimes, but it's about having fun. It is almost like a contest, who can get the most steals. We do it every day in practice." **Arkansas State Head Coach Brian Boyer Quotes**

On the loss to No. 20 Middle Tennessee

"It is very disappointing because I thought we were better than everybody else. That's a credit to them. There is no margin of error. We went through stretches in the first half where we were doing a good job of taking care of the basketball. On any one possession when you get careless, it's going to be two points on the other end. You have to be so sharp on every single possession. [Middle

Tennessee's defense] really wears on you." **On trailing by seven at the half**

"It seems like the same feeling like the last couple of years. It's almost identical to the last minute push [we made] to get a little bit of a cushion. They really got you where they wanted you. They continue to wear on you in the second half. By that time, our players are really worn down. We battled pretty hard in the first half. We gave ourselves a chance to come back in it. A couple of careless turnovers allowed them to get a bigger lead." **On the positives after the loss**

"There were some good things. I thought that the few minutes that Ebonie Jefferson was in there, she was very aggressive. Veronica Smith's minutes were very productive. It was good to see Melia [Pence] get in there late. She continues to work hard and gets better every game. We've got to build on this." **On the importance of playing North Dakota State Saturday**

"If you have to try to get them to buy into it, we are in trouble already. This game is very significant for us. There are 300-something Division I schools, there are probably only 100 of them out there that means anything. This means something to us. We have to come out there and play like this is the most important game of the year. Our postseason opportunities are still out there, but you have to win. This is a very important game. It's also important to get this taste out of our mouth. You can't do anything about this one at Middle [Tennessee], but you can use it to build upon and do good things in the future."

Printed on July 25, 2014

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/23547>