

Lady Raiders Dominate UNO 67-47

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MUFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Middle Tennessee (12-5) evened its Sun Belt record to 2-2 with a 67-47 win over New Orleans (6-10, 1-4 SBC) Saturday in the Murphy Center.

Middle Tennessee trailed early in the game 11-7 to New Orleans, but the Privateer advantage wouldn't last long. Middle Tennessee took over the lead for good on a lay-up by freshman Chrissy Givens to give the Lady Raiders a 12-11 advantage.

After taking the lead with 12:23 left in the first half, Middle Tennessee went on a 22-11 run to take a 34-22 advantage into the locker room. It was all Middle Tennessee in the second half

and UNO suffered through foul trouble from Michelle Simmons and Jovone Markey who had four fouls each with 16 minutes to go in the game.

The Lady Raiders shot a scorching 52 percent from the field, and shot 57.1 percent from the field in the second half alone. Middle Tennessee also won the rebounding edge as the Lady Raiders grabbed 33 rebounds, and 24 on the defensive side of the ball.

Middle Tennessee also made the most of the teams trips to the charity stripe, as the Lady Raiders were 11-of-14 from the free throw line. The team also had 15 steals and 16 assists.

Junior guard Patrice Holmes led all scorers with 16 points, adding four rebounds, three assists and two steals. Senior Keisha McClinic continued to shine as she swiped a career-high eight steals and also added 10 points. Freshman Krystle Horton had 15 points and Tia Stovall poured in 10.

Middle Tennessee returns to the road as the Lady Raiders travel to Las Cruces, New Mexico to take on New Mexico State Thursday. Tip-off is set for 8:05 p.m.



NOTES:

BEST START SINCE '95-96: Middle Tennessee's 12-5 record after 17 games is its best start since the 1995-96 team jumped out to a 16-1 record.

PLAYER OF THE GAME: Members of the media voted junior Patrice Holmes as the Alexander Automotive Family Player of the Game. Holmes had 16 points on 6 of 12 shooting in 33 minutes of action.

STEALS MACHINE: Senior Keisha McClinic recorded a career-best eight steals in 36 minutes of action against New Orleans which goes down as tied for the third most ever in a game by a Lady Raider. That effort comes on the heels of a seven-steal effort in the win over South Alabama on Thursday night. For the year, McClinic leads the Blue Raiders in steals with 61 which is a career season-best for the Stockbridge, Ga., native.

TOUCH COMES BACK: After suffering through four straight dismal shooting games, Middle Tennessee found its touch in the win over UNO. The Lady Raiders made 52.0 percent of their shots from the field, including 57 percent in the second half. The 52 percent shooting went down as the best effort by the Lady Raiders since connecting on 52.7 percent of their shots in a win over Chicago State on Dec. 17.

STRONG AT THE LINE: Over the past four games, Middle Tennessee has done a solid job at the free throw line. During that span, the Lady Raiders are a combined 41-for-54 (.759) at the charity stripe. MT went 11-for-14 at the line against UNO on Saturday night.

GIVENS SOLID: Freshman Chrissy Givens came off the bench against UNO to give Middle Tennessee a solid 22 minutes of action. Givens netted eight points on 4-of-6 shooting and four rebounds. The eight points went down as Givens' most since scoring 10 against Manhattan on Nov. 28, 2003.

TIDBITS: The Lady Raiders are now a perfect 3-0 against New Orleans at the Murphy Center ... MT is now 7-1 this season at home ... Ditte Jakobsen came off the bench to equal her career-best with two assists ... The 20-point win over UNO Saturday night was the Lady Raiders' largest margin of victory since defeating Lipscomb by 21 points on Dec. 30, 2003 ... The Lady Raiders were whistled for only nine fouls the entire game against UNO and only three were committed by the starting five ... MT is now 11-1 this year when leading at the half.

NEXT UP: The Lady Raiders will hit the road to take on SBC foe New Mexico State on Thursday, Jan. 29. Tip-off is scheduled for 8 PM CST.

QUOTES:

MT Head Coach Stephany Smith: "Especially for the first 32 minutes, it was probably the prettiest game of basketball that we have played all year long. I thought we lost our focus and intensity during the last eight minutes. We let things get sloppy. We gave [UNO] too many opportunities on offensive rebounds. We want to continue to try to keep our focus for all 40 minutes of the game."

"You are never going to be able to take away what happened last weekend. It was a very emotional and sad time for us. I think it does show something about this basketball team in the fact that they

were able to bounce back. They took care of business at home. Hopefully, we will be able to continue to prove that weekend to be a fluke."

"We have changed our zone defense this year. It can be very aggressive. I thought for 32 minutes it was very aggressive. But, I thought we got lazy in the last eight minutes. You probably see more zone, but not 40 minutes of zone. Pretty much, we played about 37 minutes of zone tonight. We won't be playing full games of zone for the most part. But, I thought it was the best scouting report for tonight's opponent. But, our primary defense and best defense is our man-to-man."

MT Guard Keisha McClinic: "We knew they were quick. They like to drive baseline for penetration. We wanted to take away the penetration and make them shoot outside. We had a lot of ball pressure, and we were able to get steals out of that."

MT Guard Patrice Holmes: "We wanted to attack the zone and get the ball inside the paint because [UNO] kept losing sight of our post players. We just wanted to attack the zone and be very patient in our offense."

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