Stovall Pours in 23 As Middle Tennessee Defeats Denver

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DENVER, Colo. - Tia Stovall poured in 23 points as Middle Tennessee (17-6, 7-3 Sun Belt) defeated Denver (11-12, 4-7 Sun Belt) 68-56 Sunday in the Magness Arena.

Middle Tennessee only trailed once in the game, when the Lady Raiders were down 2-0 to start the game. In the first half, Middle Tennessee had built an 11 point lead, but Denver cut it down to just four, 42-38, at the half when they went on an 8-2 run in the final two and half minutes of the game.

"I think we did a good job coming out of the gate," said head coach Stephany Smith. "Near the end of the first half we started turning the ball over and they began to press and we panicked a little."

In the second half, Middle Tennessee built a 15 point lead before Denver began to whittle at the lead again. The Lady Pioneers Tasaha Jones cut the lead to seven when she hit a three-pointer with 2:15 left to play to make the score 61-54. Freshman Krystle Horton had an answer for Denver's bucket as she came down and hit a lay-up to push the lead back to nine. In the final two minutes of the game, Middle Tennessee went on a 5-2 run to keep Denver at bay.

Stovall scored a season-high and game leading 23 points, with 15 of her points coming in the first half. She also had five rebounds, three assists and three steals.

Senior Keisha McClinic continues to quietly do what she does best as she had 11 rebounds, five steals and three assists. McClinic now has 85 steals on the season.

Horton had 15 points in the game and Patrice Holmes added 12 points.

Middle Tennessee tied its season-high in field goal percentage, shooting 57.1 percent from the field. Denver shot a chilly 32.8 percent from the field.

The win gives the Lady Raiders a sweep of the Sun Belt Conference Western Division. Middle Tennessee is the only team from the East to do so.

Middle Tennessee returns home on Thursday to host Sun Belt East leader Arkansas State. Tip-off is set for 7 p.m.

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