Blue Raiders start slow in setback to Belmont

Hudson's career-best 15 leads team

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NASHVILLE - Middle Tennessee got off to a slow start and never was able to recover against Belmont on its way to an 85-62 setback at the Curb Event Center in Nashville Monday night. The Blue Raiders (2-4) were led by Theryn Hudson's career-high 15 points and seven rebounds, while Kevin Kanaskie added 14 points and four assists. Demetrius Green was the only other Blue Raider in double figures with 12 points. Belmont's balanced scoring attack was led by Matthew Dotson's 18 points on the strength of 8-of-10 shooting from the field. Three other Bruins (5-2) netted double figures in the win. Middle Tennessee's bench had contributed depth and balance in the team's first five games but it was hardly a factor against the Bruins as the Blue Raider reserves finished with 11 points on 3-of-16 shooting. Hudson (6-of-9) and Kanaskie (5-of-8) combined to shoot 11-of-17 from the field but aside of their strong shooting the rest of the Blue Raiders were just 12-of-38 from the field. The Bruins' reserves outscored Middle Tennessee 42-11. "Belmont guarded us better than we guarded them tonight and they were the tougher team around the goal," Middle Tennessee coach Kermit Davis said. "They played a complete game. We have to keep working and find ways to improve as a team." Most disappointing for the Blue Raiders was the large rebounding margin and Belmont's shooting display against a defense that has allowed the opponent to shoot 50 percent or higher in all four setbacks. The Bruins shot 50 percent from the field, including 40 percent from 3-point range, and they outrebounded the Blue Raiders 40-24. Of their 40 caroms, 13 were on the offensive end. "We didn't rebound very well and we didn't guard very well but that's pretty obvious,"

Kanaskie said. "We have to improve those areas to get things turned around for us." Belmont blew out to a 51-29 lead and maintained its advantage throughout the second half as the Blue Raiders were never able to sustain runs or get consistent stops until late in the game. The second half was played pretty much even with Belmont winning the final 20 minutes, 34-33, but the damage had already been done. The Blue Raiders will play at Houston Saturday before returning to action at home against Belmont, Dec. 12.

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