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Queen's double-double leads Blue Raiders over DU

Lanning also scores career-high 18 in victory

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - [Emily Queen](#) posted her first career double-double with 17 points and 11 rebounds and [Anne Marie Lanning](#) scored a career-high 18 points, and the two freshmen led four Middle Tennessee scorers in double figures in a 93-55 victory over Denver Sunday afternoon at Murphy Center.

Senior [Amber Holt](#) added a very efficient 24 points, hitting 10-of-14 field goals and 4-for-5 at the foul line, while sophomore [Chelsia Lymon](#) added 12 points. Senior [Starr Orr](#) also grabbed nine rebounds to go with Queen's 11, as the Blue Raiders won the battle of the glass, 39-30.

The Blue Raiders started sluggish, scoring just four points in the first four minutes of the game, but the squad put together a 17-3 run over the next five minutes for a 16-point lead. The home team pushed the advantage to as many as 20 points at 35-15 after Holt hit two free throws, the last of her 15 points in the half.

The Blue Raiders forced 17 Denver turnovers and turned those into 18 points before the break, but Middle Tennessee also committed 14 turnovers of its own, more than the squad has been giving away in any full game over the last six weeks.

In the second half the Blue Raiders let the Pioneers hang around, as the visitors cut the deficit to 56-41 with 10:21 remaining, but the home team scored 24 of the next 30 points to push the lead to 33 with 4:54 to play.

Queen started the run with a 3-pointer from the corner and scored 10 of her 13 points during the run, including a perfect 6-for-6 at the foul line.

Lanning was 4-for-7 from the field, including 3-of-5 from 3-point range, and added 7-of-8 free throws for her career-high 18. It was her sixth double-figure scoring game of the season.

Middle Tennessee shot exactly 50 percent (30-for-60) from the field and hit nine 3-pointers, three each by Lanning and Lymon. The Blue Raiders also cut down on their turnovers in the second half, committing just four after the break.

Denver posted 32 turnovers in the contest and the Blue Raiders turned those into 38 points. Nnenna Akotaobi led the Pioneers with 16 points and was the only DU player in double figures.

The Blue Raiders host Florida Atlantic Thursday at 7 p.m. to finish a two-game homestand.

POSTGAME NOTES

QUEEN POSTS FIRST DOUBLE-DOUBLE: Freshman [Emily Queen](#) posted her first double-double in the contest with a career-high 17 points as well as 11 rebounds. Queen was 4-for-6 from the floor with one 3-pointer and hit all eight of her free throw attempts. It is the fifth double-double of the year by the Blue Raiders. [Amber Holt](#) has the other four. Middle Tennessee posted 11 double-doubles as a team in 2006-07.

LANNING KEEPS PLUGGING AWAY: Freshman [Anne Marie Lanning](#) keeps finding ways to score and contribute for the Blue Raiders. The Riverdale HS product posted her sixth double figure scoring game of the year against Denver, collecting a career-high 18 points. Lanning was 4-for-7 from the field, including 3-of-5 from 3-point range, and added 7-of-8 free throws for her career-high 18. She is shooting a team-best 44 percent (19-for-43) from 3-point range this season.

HOLT EFFICIENT IN VICTORY: Senior [Amber Holt](#) continued her torrid scoring pace this season, netting 24 points in the win over Denver. Holt was a very efficient 10-of-14 from the field and 4-for-5 at the foul line, playing just 27 minutes. It marked the ninth time this year the Duluth, Ga., native has made double-digit field goals in a game and also was her 11th contest with 20-plus points in 2007-08.



Freshman Emily Queen recorded her first career double-double with 17 points and 11 rebounds in Middle Tennessee's 93-55 victory over Denver Sunday. (Bradley Lambert)

ORR HITS THE BOARDS: Senior [Starr Orr](#) contributed some much needed rebounding for the Blue Raiders against Denver, grabbing a season-high nine boards. Orr's previous high this season was five on two different occasions, the last at South Alabama on December 22. The nine boards ties for the second-best rebounding total behind her career-high 11 at Austin Peay on December 28, 2005. The Danville, Ala., native also grabbed nine rebounds against Florida Atlantic on February 24, 2007, and versus Denver on February 10, 2005.

RAIDERS EXTEND HOME SBC WINNING STREAK: Middle Tennessee extended its home dominance of Sun Belt competition with its 32nd straight victory at Murphy Center after Sunday's triumph against Denver. 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 36 of their last 37 home conference games and head coach Rick Insell is a perfect 20-0 at the Glass House against SBC competition. In fact, since joining the Sun Belt before the 2000-01 season, the Blue Raiders are 48-6 at home against Sun Belt competition, an exquisite .889 winning percentage.

TIDBITS: Middle Tennessee improved to 8-3 all-time against Denver with eight consecutive victories in the series. All 11 meetings have come since the Blue Raiders joined the Sun Belt before the 2000-01 season ... Middle Tennessee upped its mark to 32-4 at home under head coach Rick Insell, including 17-0 in the regular season versus Sun Belt foes ... The Blue Raiders committed 18 turnovers in the game, including 14 in the first half. It was the most miscues for the club since committing 19 turnovers at Houston on November 19, a span of 12 games ... Middle Tennessee forced 32 turnovers by Denver and converted those into 38 points ... The Blue Raiders shot 50 percent (30-for-60) from the field, the fifth time this year the squad has hit 50 percent or better. Middle Tennessee's record in those games is 4-1 ... Middle Tennessee recorded 20 steals in the contest, the third time this year the club has had 20 or more steals in a game. The Blue Raiders also posted 20 steals at Austin Peay and had a season-high 24 thefts versus Tennessee Tech ... Middle Tennessee scored 93 points in the game, the second most this season behind the 95 at Austin Peay. It marks the 10th contest the Blue Raiders have scored 90 or more points under third-year head coach Rick Insell ... Middle Tennessee set team season-highs in free throws and attempts, making 24-of-32 at the charity stripe ... [Chelsia Lymon](#) set a season-high and tied her career-high with three 3-pointers in the game. She also set a season-high with four assists ... [Emily Queen](#) set career-highs in free throws and attempts, hitting 8-for-8, and also had a career-high four steals ... [Starr Orr](#) set a season-high with four assists ... [Angelique Burtts](#) grabbed a career-high six rebounds and played a career-best 22 minutes ... [Anne Marie Lanning](#) tied her career-high with three 3-pointers and set career-bests in free throws and attempts, making 7-of-8.

POSTGAME QUOTES

Middle Tennessee head coach Rick Insell

On defense

"Rebounding and defense, we have got to get better. Right now we have some young players but they are very talented young players. There are some things I am asking them to do that they can do but sometimes they don't think that they can do them. We can get up the line and deflect balls and that is what we are looking for right now, the deflections and charges. We have to get better at it. That is one of our emphases, right now, in practices. We are going to get better. We had 39 rebounds tonight. [Denver] is a pretty good basketball team but I think we took them out of their game. It will be a different game when we go out there. Right now it is just one game at a time. We have Florida Atlantic next. We have three good practices right now."

On the 14 turnovers in the first half

"We don't turn the ball over. It was something that was addressed. It was something that was uncharacteristic of us. The other night we had 12 turnovers and lost the ball game. Twelve turnovers, score 81 points and lose the ball game. You have to work hard to do that."

On other players besides [Amber Holt](#) scoring

"Everybody we have can get in double figures. We were not attacking the basket. We need to give Amber [Holt] some time. We are wearing her out. She is doing everything but driving the bus to the games. We need to give her some rest. We have some players that can step up and they did today. Denver is not a bad basketball team. I think Pam Tanner maybe does the best job in our conference coaching and she always has."

Middle Tennessee freshman guard [Anne Marie Lanning](#)

On other players besides [Amber Holt](#) scoring

"We have a lot especially since Brandi [Brown] is out. Brandi was a point producer. I thought tonight we all stepped up and we are going to have to start doing that. Amber can't take the whole load on her back."

On practices

"Our practices have been focused on our defense, rebounding, taking charges and deflections. Our on-the-ball defense is good but our off-the-ball defense has not been that great. That is what we have been working on in practice."

Middle Tennessee freshman forward [Emily Queen](#)

On other players besides [Amber Holt](#) scoring

"Coach has really been enforcing that. Amber [Holt] has been playing 40 minutes almost every game. If she does go out, we need to know that we can score without her. In practice Coach has been talking about looking for other people to score. We have been working on that and giving Amber breaks in practice so we can work on the offense without her. So when she needs a break we can be ready for that."

"It felt good to come out the second half and do better than I had done in the first half because I really didn't come out ready to play in the first half."

On rebounds

"We just have to have everyone going to the boards. We do not have one big girl that we just know is going to get a rebound for us. We have been working on that and I thought we did a lot better today."

Denver head coach Pam Tanner

On the loss to Middle Tennessee

"It was 4-2 for a long time, but it doesn't bode well when you have 19 turnovers in your starting five. If you look at one stat, that would be the one I would pick. I think we did some good things offensively when we weren't turning the ball over, but we only shot 50 percent from the line. We got there 22 times and only made 11. That would be another stat that I would look at. If you look at them, they shot 47 percent in the first half and 54 percent in the second half. You are not going to beat a lot of teams when you allow them to hit half the shots that they take."

On the play of Middle Tennessee

"Unfortunately, I think we just let the game get away from us. We played faster than what we wanted to play. Some of that is on Middle Tennessee's defense and some of that is on our offense because we didn't handle the ball well. We have played Middle Tennessee teams where the crowd was bigger and the defense was so aggressive and athletic that we couldn't get the ball across half-court at times. This isn't necessarily the same defense, but it's a good defense. Middle Tennessee has earned this distinction. They have this mystique about them. Until the conference makes a decision that they are going to overcome the mystique, Middle Tennessee is going to be the team to beat in this league."

On the effort by Denver

"I give our kids some credit. I don't think we didn't play hard today. That might be one of the hardest games I have seen Sara Benham play both offensively and defensively. She didn't have great numbers tonight, but I thought she played well. If you didn't show me the stat sheet tonight, I thought she might have scored more. We definitely played hard, but that's not going to get you wins. We just didn't execute. Some of that is on us and some of that is their defense."

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