Lymon's 24 leads Raiders over UNT

Sophomore scores career-high, including four 3-pointers

January 26, 2008 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Chelsia Lymon led all scorers with a career-high 24 points and Middle Tennessee started the second half with an 18-2 run to pull away, as the Blue Raiders defeated North Texas, 89-50, Saturday night at Murphy Center. Lymon posted the first 20-point game of her career and overshadowed the Blue Raider rebounding effort, which won the battle of the glass, 39-33, thanks to 10 rebounds each from Angelique Burtts and Emily Queen and nine more by Amber Holt. Lymon was 9-for-14 from the field, including 4-of-7 from 3-point range, and scored 20 of her 24 points in the second half when Middle Tennessee (13-8, 8-2 Sun Belt) exploded, outscoring the Mean Green, 54-21, after the break. Lymon also handed out four of the Blue Raiders 18 assists in the contest. Holt, the nation's leading scorer, struggled from the field, going 7-for-25, but still scored 20 points, dished out five assists and made four steals. Middle Tennessee had 18 steals as a team, including a career-high six by Burtts. Jackie Pickel also added 11 points for the winners, knocking down a trio of 3-pointers and adding a pair of steals. The Blue Raiders started the game fast and led 16-11 with 10:06 remaining thanks to a pair of 3-pointers from Anne Marie Lanning and four points each from Queen and Lymon. But North Texas (9-11, 4-4) came storming back, putting together a 12-0 run over the next 4:29 of the game, taking a 23-16 advantage with 5:35 left in the half after an old-fashioned 3-point play from Brittney James. James hit a 3-pointer to start the run and Talicia Sanders had a pair of buckets in the lane to put the Mean Green ahead seven. But Middle Tennessee responded with its own 9-0 spurt, starting with a Pickel 3-pointer from the wing. Queen had a put-back after a Lymon miss, then stole the inbounds pass and laid it in to tie the game

at 23. Holt's layup put the Raiders ahead by two, but UNT continued to battle, hitting shot after shot in the half, 13-of-25 total in the first 20 minutes. After the Mean Green tied the contest for the sixth time of the half at 29, the Blue Raiders scored the final six points before intermission - Pickel hit a 15-footer, then Holt made two free throws on an offensive rebound before Holt made another layup with six seconds left for a 35-29 Middle Tennessee advantage at the break. In the second half Starr Orr scored the first five points for the Blue Raiders before another Pickel trifecta. Burrts hit two free throws after grabbing an offensive rebound, Orr made another jumper and Lymon hit two straight 3-pointers before Amber Jackson's jumper ended the run with 13:56 left in the contest. Jackson finished with 16 points and a game-high 11 rebounds and James added 17 points. North Texas committed 28 turnovers in the game, 19 in the second half, which the Blue Raiders turned into 36 points. Middle Tennessee plays at Louisiana-Lafayette on Wednesday at 7 p.m. The Blue Raiders return home to face UALR at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 6. **POSTGAME QUOTES**

Head Coach Rick Insell

On the team's performance

"I've said it over and over; I've got talented young players. We have freshmen and sophomores and they're not getting the opportunity to watch upperclassmen. They've got to come in and get in the games right now and right now they're playing against some of the best competition in America. You have Chelsia [Lymon] stepping up, Amber [Holt], Starr [Orr], and Jackie [Pickel] is the one that came in and gave us that big spark with that big three; that was big for us. And then Angelique [Burtts], she has been growing on the floor. Emily [Queen] just battles all night long like Chelsia, Latoya [Barclay] and Starr. I enjoy watching them. I've been coaching 35 years and I've enjoyed coaching every one of those teams but I haven't enjoyed watching every one of those teams. This team I enjoy watching. They play with all heart." **On causing more turnovers in the second half**

"We changed some things up, changed presses. Our rotation is what kind of hurt us. We were tired, there's no dodging the issue, and it showed. That's why we played some people early. You've never seen Chelsia have to come out.We had to give Amber a break early. But they played tough through it and I'm proud of them." **On North Texas**

"They're a well-coached team. Tina [Slinker] does a great job; they've got some good athletes. We put the ball in the hole tonight and when we do that, we are a pretty tough team to beat. We shot 54 percent in the second half; we were 50 percent from the 3-point line and 75 percent from the free throw line. When you have a second half like that, it is damaging [to the other team]." **On Amber Holt**

"She is tired, she is out of energy. The other night in Monroe we played her, then we hooked her back up and dragged her back to Murfreesboro. So she was tired and we knew it. She gave us some good minutes but we're going to give her some rest now. We'll give her a days rest and hook her back up Monday." **Sophomore guard Chelsia Lymon**

On a career high 24 points

"I had no clue, I just found out when I came out of the locker room. I was just trying to get the game over. It's tough with the game stretch that we've had - going to Monroe and flying. Every shot I took I felt like two tons of bricks were on my legs so I had to push myself to get through my tiredness. It's a great team win for us and we gave it everything we had." **On Amber Holt**

"It's amazing. Having her on my team is wonderful. We tried to come together for Amber and for the team because she gives it her all every night. Any point guard would dream to have someone like her on their team. I'm loving it and I hate that it's her last year but I'm going to play until the end for her." **Sophomore guard Jackie Pickel**

On role tonight

"All season long I've kind of been struggling. When I go in there and especially when it's a close

game, I've got to be ready." **On the team's performance**

"All of us can score on any given night. It's good to get the confidence back in our team and know that we can do it even when Amber is not having a good night - not having a good night and scoring 20 points." **North Texas head coach Tina Slinker**

On the first half

"What happened was more in the first half. We were handing the press well and scoring some transition buckets. Then when we failed to do that, they really took advantage of it. I think scoring buckets off their press is really critical against them." **On Middle Tennessee jumping out to a bigger lead in the second half**

"I think that happens when you start getting the lead from six to 14 really quick. I think that happens to all of us. When you get that lead everybody seems to take a deeper breath. They are one of the best 3-point shooting teams in the conference." **On holding Amber Holt to 20 points**

"I felt that gameplan was good. We made other kids step up and now we realized that they can. That's why they are a championship team because they have kids that can step up like that." **On the positives after this loss**

"Even if you just take the first half, we come in at Middle Tennessee only six down at the half. We did handle the press very well. In the first half, we only had nine turnovers. We took advantage of some inside play. Our guards played very well. I think it's just so fragile that you can let the game slip away against a team like this." **On the atmosphere at Middle Tennessee**

"It's awesome. It's great for Middle Tennessee and for women's basketball in the Sun Belt Conference. That's what we all want to play under. Middle Tennessee really has it going on here."

Printed on March 9, 2014
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/29696