

Raiders fall to UALR, 66-53

Loss ends 35-game home conference winning streak

February 6, 2008 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Anshel Cooper scored 20 points, leading four UALR players in double figures, and the Trojans did everything right, including making 64 percent from the field, in defeating Middle Tennessee, 66-53, Wednesday night at Murphy Center. The loss ended a 35-game home winning streak against conference opponents for the Blue Raiders (14-9, 9-3 Sun Belt), who last tasted defeat at the Glass House on February 25, 2004. It also ended a five-game winning streak for Middle Tennessee this season, the team's longest of the year. UALR committed 18 turnovers, the second fewest by a Middle Tennessee opponent this season, but the biggest difference came in field goal shooting. The Trojans made almost everything, including 5-of-7 from 3-point range, while the Blue Raiders hit only 29 percent, a season-low, and missed several gimmies in both halves that killed any



momentum for the home team. Kim Sitzmann hit four of UALR's five 3-pointers and finished with 14 points, while Nikya Hughes scored 18, making 7-of-8 shots from the field. Freshman Chastity Reed came off the bench to score 11 points and grab a game-high nine rebounds, and her shot on an inbounds play late in the second half typified the entire game. UALR had the ball under its own goal with just under four minutes to play and only two seconds on the shot clock. The Trojans lobbed the ball to Reed on the inbounds and the 6-foot-1 forward jumped and shot all in the same motion from about 10 feet. The ball hit the front of the rim, then the right side before finally falling through. UALR

(16-6, 8-3) led by one point at halftime, 27-26, and raced out to a 44-33 advantage at the 12:20 mark and a Reed layup. Cooper had six points during the 17-7 run while Hughes added four. Middle Tennessee would pull no closer than seven points the rest of the way. The Blue Raiders tried several different presses and even a box-and-one defense on Sitzmann to try and slow down the Trojans, but nothing seemed to work, as Cooper continued to break down the defense for easy buckets either for herself or other players. Amber Holt led Middle Tennessee with 26 points and was the only Blue Raider with a good shooting night, hitting 9-of-20, while the rest of the squad was just 9-for-43. Holt added a team-best seven rebounds and three assists. Chelsia Lymon netted 11 points, grabbed five rebounds and handed out four assists. UALR hit 10-of-16 from the field in the first half to take a 27-26 advantage at the break. Sitzmann had a pair of 3-pointers, Hughes scored 11 on 4-of-5 shooting and Cooper netted eight. Holt scored 15 in the half, hitting 5-for-10 shots, but the rest of the squad was just 4-of-21, including Lymon making only 2-of-8. The game was tied five times in the half and saw seven lead changes. The Blue Raiders led by four early in the contest at 13-9 after one of Holt's two 3-pointers. UALR scored four in a row on consecutive jumpers from Cooper with just over five minutes before intermission to take a 3-point edge. Middle Tennessee takes on Florida International in Miami on Saturday at 4:15 p.m. CT. The Blue Raiders return home for a pair of games next week, taking on South Alabama Thursday, Feb. 14, at 5:30 p.m. and then hosting rival Western Kentucky on Sunday, Feb. 17, at 2 p.m. **POSTGAME NOTES**

HOME WINNING STREAK COMES TO AN END: Middle Tennessee's 35-game home winning streak against conference opponents came to an end with the 66-53 loss to UALR. The Blue Raiders had not lost at home versus a Sun Belt foe under head coach Rick Insell, who was a perfect 24-0 at Murphy Center, and had not lost a home contest versus an SBC opponent since February 5, 2004. Overall the Blue Raiders have won 39 of the last 41 games versus the SBC at the Glass House.

HOLT MOVES UP SCORING LISTS: Senior Amber Holt scored 26 points in the game and moved up the career and single-season scoring lists with her efforts. Holt surpassed Holly Hoover (1,181 points, 1982-84) for 16th place and has 1,182 points heading into Saturday's contest at Florida International. Holt needs 52 points to pass Jonelda Buck (1,233 points, 1996-99) for 15th place and 55 points to move past Kay Willbanks (1,236 points, 1984-87) for 14th place on the all-time list. On the single-season charts, Holt passed Kim Webb (610, 1987) for sixth place and now has 615 points in 2007-08. She needs six points to surpass Tawanya Mucker (620, 1989) for sixth place and 25 points to move past Jamie Thomatis (639, 2001) for fourth place on the single-season charts. At her current pace Holt would break the single-season mark set last season by Chrissy Givens (768) in the final regular season game of the year. **RAIDERS STRUGGLE FROM THE FIELD:** Middle

Tennessee made just 18-of-63 field goals in the contest, shooting a season-low 29 percent from the field in the loss to UALR. It was the worst shooting percentage under head coach Rick Insell and the worst percentage since the Blue Raiders made only 28 percent (18-of-64) versus Georgia on December 30, 2002. **Worst Shooting Percentages Since 2000-01**

12/30/02 Georgia 18-64 (.281)

02/06/08 UALR 18-63 (.286)

12/17/01 at Kansas State 18-62 (.290)

01/25/01 Louisiana Tech 19-65 (.292)

11/13/06 South Dakota State 20-65 (.308)

03/23/04 at Notre Dame 18-55 (.327)

02/27/06 at Florida International 22-67 (.328)

01/08/04 Alabama 19-58 (.328)

TIDBITS: Middle Tennessee dropped to 11-3 all-time against UALR, including 5-1 at Murphy Center ... The team's 53 points was a season-low. The last time the Blue Raiders scored 53 or less was

also against UALR on January 14, 2006, a 58-53 loss in Little Rock ... Chelsia Lymon tied her career-high with five assists and played a career-high 38 minutes in the contest. Lymon has 13 assists in the last three games ... Jackie Pickel set a career-high with four rebounds and tied season-highs by going 1-for-2 at the foul line. **Postgame Quotes**

Head coach Rick Insell

On a disappointing defensive effort

"We didn't have any kind of pressure up front. We did a very poor job up front and in the center. We knew coming in we couldn't let [Anshel] Cooper catch the ball at the center line and we never once denied her the basketball. When you allow Cooper to get the ball she's going to break you down. We didn't get anything out of our press. I don't think we denied the ball up in front of the press one time all night." **On missing shots**

"When you miss five gimmies early in the game, that's kind of the tempo [throughout]. You can't run offense and get better shots than what we got early on. At that time we were up two or three points, and [making those shots] is going to put the tempo in our favor. Instead it played to theirs. We shot the ball 63 times, but we didn't make good decisions offensively and we didn't execute, and they did a good job." **On losing a conference game at home**

"They had 18 turnovers, and we had eight. Still, when you shoot 29 percent, you can't win doing that. We didn't come in with the right attitude all across the board. You can't play a team like [Arkansas]-Little Rock like we played them tonight. They're a good team and they're well-coached." **On taking time off**

"We were playing well up to this game. Maybe we shouldn't have taken some time off, maybe we should have stayed after it. We were playing pretty good and then I gave them four days off and you saw the results tonight" **On getting the bench involved**

"I'm going to start playing more people. We've got some kids that want to play, and we've got some over there that can play. They're just not playing to their potential yet, but they will. We've got six sophomores and freshmen." **On the play of Latoya Barclay**

"I thought Latoya Barclay did a good job tonight. She hustled and did all she could do. She didn't get a lot of points, but she was attacking, and that's what we need to do. **Senior guard Amber Holt**
On tonight's loss

"They tried to double-team me and I would kick it out, but we weren't knocking down shots. If we had knocked down shots we would have won the game." **Sophomore guard Chelsia Lymon**
On tonight's loss

"It's really disappointing. We did some things we shouldn't have done. We were on this winning streak, we were playing pretty well, and then we hit a roadblock, which was today. But we have practice and we can still live to see another day, we just need to work harder." **On having time off**

"[Coach Insell] gave us a couple of days off. I think we needed those two days for our bodies to recover, but I think some of us took those two days and got lazy. But we'll get back in practice and work hard and come back with a couple of wins coming up." **UALR Coach Joe Foley**

On snapping Middle Tennessee's home win streak against Sun Belt competition

"That's a heck of a tribute to Middle Tennessee's program. They've done well taking care of business at home. Rick [Insell] is a great coach. We caught them at a good time. We didn't play well at Western Kentucky in the second half. We went home and had a few days to practice. Most of the time, you don't have that much time to prepare for Middle Tennessee. We broke the press a lot better than we normally do. That cost them a little bit. It's a great tribute to Middle Tennessee to have a great win streak at home. It's a great tribute for our kids to come in and stay focused and not get rattled." **On taking advantage of Middle Tennessee's low shooting percentage**

"Amber Holt was trying to get some shots. They were trying to make some three's and couldn't get

them, which hurt their confidence a little bit. That's the reason you play the game. In the next game, if they knock down those 3-pointers, it's a different ball game. We caught them on the night we needed to catch them. They are heck of a ball club. I'm proud of the way they represent the Sun Belt, but I'm also proud of the way our kids played tonight." **On gaining confidence to play Middle Tennessee on the road**

Tennessee on the road

"I think the game with Western Kentucky helped our young kids. We were almost tied with Western Kentucky at the end of the first half, but we weren't ready to play in the second half and they blew us out. It wasn't hard to remind them of that. Usually 20 minutes is a warm up for Middle Tennessee and they usually get it going. They couldn't get it going tonight." **On defeating Middle Tennessee on the road**

on the road

"It definitely helps. It gives a lot of confidence to our two freshmen and sophomores who played well tonight. It shows them that they can play on one of the best team's in the nation's home floor. It helps them buy into what we are trying to teach them. That's the key when you have freshmen and sophomores."

Printed on July 25, 2014

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/29943>