# Raiders drop 74-62 decision at FIU

## Squad loses second contest in a row

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**MIAMI, Fla.** - Middle Tennessee started well but ran into another buzzsaw, this one named Monica Bosilj, as the Florida International sophomore scored a career-high 32 points and the Golden Panthers shot 59 percent from the field en route to a 74-62 victory over the Blue Raiders Saturday at Pharmed Arena. Middle Tennessee (14-10, 9-4 Sun Belt) jumped out to a 10-point lead midway through the first half only to be outscored 26-5 over the final nine minutes. FIU led 36-25 at halftime and continued to pour it on, thanks to torrid shooting from the home team. Bosilj was especially deadly, netting 13 of 16 points during one stretch of the half, including three 3-pointers. Asha Neal also scored 13 points for the Golden Panthers (11-13, 7-6) and grabbed 10 rebounds, part of FIU's 42-30 edge on the boards. The Blue Raiders did not score a field goal for the final 9:55 of the first half and another 3:27 of the second half (13:25 combined) and posted just five points during the stretch, all from the foul line. FIU scored the first eight points of the second half to extend the lead to 44-25 and the Blue Raiders would get no closer than 14 until the final basket of the game, a 3-pointer from Lymon just before the buzzer. The Golden Panthers extended their lead to as many as 25 points at 72-47 after a Fanni Hutlassa layup. Amber Holt led the Blue Raiders with 21 points and seven rebounds. She also added three assists and three steals. Anne Marie Lanning hit four 3-pointers for the Blue Raiders and finished with 14 points, while Chelsia Lymon and Emily Queen both scored 11 points. Middle Tennessee hits just 29 percent from the field, its second straight game under 30 percent. The Blue Raiders were only 7-for-27 in the first half when FIU gained the momentum it

needed. "We started well but then just quit putting the ball in the hole and that was the difference in the game," head coach Rick Insell said. "We only shot 29 percent and [FIU] hit a lot of shots and they just continued to hit shots when we were trying to make a comeback." The Blue Raiders started unusually fast, jumping out to a 20-10 advantage midway through the opening period. Lanning scored 11 of the team's points, hitting three 3-pointers. Holt added six and Starr Orr hit a 3-pointer with 9:55 remaining before intermission for a 10-point advantage. But Orr's jumper would be the last basket of the half for the Blue Raiders, who scored just five more points before the break, all on free throws. Middle Tennessee hit just one of its last 14 shots in the final 10 minutes of the half and the Golden Panthers took full advantage, going on a 26-5 run to end the first 20 minutes with a 36-25 FIU advantage. The home team made 9-of-14 from the field over the final 10:56 of the half, including eight points from LaQuetta Ferguson before she injured her knee with 3:55 before intermission. Bisilj also added eight points and Neal scored six of the team's final eight points of the half, including a driving layup with one second before the break. The Blue Raiders committed nine turnovers during the FIU run after posting only two in the first nine minutes. Middle Tennessee begins a two-game homestand Thursday, hosting South Alabama t 5:30 p.m. in the first game of a doubleheader with the men. The Blue Raiders also host Western Kentucky at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 17. **POSTGAME QUOTES**

**Freshman Guard Anne Marie Lanning**

**On Florida International's comeback**

"We were up 20-10 and then that's when they started making a run and we made mistakes that we ordinarily don't make." **On allowing FIU to comeback**

"We were up on them. You would think we would get up on them and run with it, but we haven't been able to do that." **On what happened during the game to allow FIU to comeback**

"We just weren't playing our game, weren't finding people who were open and we weren't finishing our shots. We weren't doing what we usually do." **On if the defensive press was non-effective**

"I didn't think it was against them. It didn't seem to affect them. We tried to change things defensively and it didn't seem to faze them. They had an answer for every change." **On getting ready for the next game against South Alabama**

"We need to go back to practice and work hard and try to figure out what is wrong with us." **Middle Tennessee head coach Rick Insell**

**On the loss to FIU**

"When you shoot 29 percent, you can't win games. We made good shots early and then all of a sudden we started missing free throws. We missed chippie shots. You can't do that and win ball games. We were up 20-10 and we missed two or three 3-footers and missed a few free throws. We missed some shots that we should have hit. We talked about it in practice and we just didn't do it."

**On the late comeback of his team**

"The other kids stepped up and hit some shots and did a good job. The last bunch we had in there did a good job and made some shots. I was pleased with their effort." **On shooting 29 percent**

"We were just standing around. Chelsia Lymon was 0-for-7 at halftime. Your point guard can't go 0-for-7 at halftime and win ball games. Either you don't shoot or you make good shots. That was not the only reason we were down, but that was a big part." **On the team's defensive press**

"I thought we were getting better in practice, but evidently we're not. They knocked down four shots when we went to the zone defense. Then we went back to man-to-man and caused them some problems. We were a bad basketball team tonight. When we are a bad team, I'll tell you we are a bad team and when we are a good team, I'll tell you we are a good team. Tonight, we were a bad basketball team." **On the play of Monika Bosilj**

"She's got a left arm hurt too. She can't get it up. She did a good job with one arm. They did a good

job getting her open and she did what she was supposed to do." **On the overall play of FIU**
"They know how to play the game of basketball. Early on we were executing our offense. A game hinges on a play. There was a play or two that we went 1-of-5 and threw up a prayer. It had no chance of getting in. They knock down a three, we miss a rebound and they knock down another three and then they are going." **On having a late surge in the game**
"That happens a lot of times to us when we are playing teams. It happened to us tonight and we'll have to go back to practice and regroup. We have lost four games in the conference now and we must take care of business. We've got two home games with South Alabama and Western Kentucky. If we can't turn it around then we may not be able to."

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