

Blue Raider win streak ends, 66-60, at Florida International International

Yates registers double double in setback

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MIAMI - The road always can be tough but even the Sun Belt's best road team over the last six seasons became weary in its third road trip in four games in Miami Saturday night. Middle Tennessee's recent strong run was derailed as Florida International used timely offense and stingy defense to end the Blue Raiders' four-game win streak in a 66-60 win at Pharmed Arena Saturday night. Middle Tennessee still has won seven of its last 10 as it heads home to face South Alabama Thursday. The Blue Raiders (11-12, 8-5) shot 51 percent for the game but it was 17 turnovers and a 60 percent (12-of-20) showing at the free-throw line that proved detrimental to their cause. Desmond Yates continued his consistent play with his third double double of the season as he scored 12 points and grabbed a game-high 10 rebounds but the sophomore forward was only able to get



six touches as the Golden Panthers double-teamed him and made it difficult for the guards to feed him the ball on the post. "When you are a good player teams do that, they double team you and work harder against you and Desmond Yates is a good player," Middle Tennessee coach Kermit Davis said. "I just have to give credit to Florida International and coach (Sergio) Rouco. They played well and they really got after us defensively." Demetrius Green also tallied 12 points for the Blue Raiders, Kevin Kanaskie netted 11 and Theryn Hudson tallied 10. The game was evenly played throughout the first half and into the second but Florida International (7-16, 4-9) had the game swing in its favor

late when it used a 10-2 run to open the largest lead of contest for either team, 54-44, with less than five minutes remaining. Middle Tennessee put together a strong run and gave the Golden Panthers a finish when they pulled to within two with less than a minute remaining. The Blue Raiders played a great defensive series but Chris Fuller knocked down an off-balance 3-pointer from the left corner with one second on the shot clock to extend the lead to five with less than 30 seconds remaining. "That was a big shot by Fuller and he hit a few big ones in the second half," Davis said. "We played great defense that series and gave ourselves a chance but he stepped up and hit the shot that was kind of the dagger. I still am proud of our team for having enough left in the tank to battle back and give ourselves a chance when we were down 10 late." Middle Tennessee trailed 30-29 at the half and the game remained a one-possession affair throughout the early portion of the second half but Kanaskie's 3-pointer provided a 42-40 Blue Raider lead with 12:44 remaining and Hudson's layup with 12:18 remaining allowed Middle Tennessee to equal its largest lead of the game, 44-40, but it was short lived as the Golden Panthers went on a 12-2 run over the next six minutes to start swinging the momentum its way for good. Fuller led the Florida International attack with a game-high 16 points while Alex Galindo added 13.

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