Raiders shoot their way to second round

Holt leads six players in double figures in 104-69 triumph

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee started the game with a 24-6 run and never looked back, knocking down 13 3-pointers and placing six players in double figures en route to a 104-69 victory over Western Carolina in the first round of the WNIT Wednesday night at Murphy Center, avenging a loss from earlier this season. Middle Tennessee advances to play Kentucky at 6 p.m. CT Friday night in Lexington, Ky. Amber Holt led all scorers with 30 points and nine rebounds, while five other players scored between 10 and 13 points. Chelsia Lymon and Brandi Brown scored 13 apiece, Starr Orr netted 12, Jackie Pickel had 11 and Anne Marie Lanning posted 10. Emily Queen added nine points and 10 rebounds, as the Blue Raiders outrebounded the Lady Catamounts, 34-29. WCU won the first meeting between the teams this season largely because of a 53-27 edge on the glass. The Blue Raiders played perhaps their finest half of basketball of the season in the opening 20 minutes, taking a 51-26 advantage to intermission. Middle Tennessee shot 59 percent from the field, including 7-of-15 from 3-point range, and handed out 12 assists. It also helped that the Lady Catamounts couldn't buy a field goal in the opening eight minutes of the game, making just 1-of-11 and falling behind 24-6 at the second media timeout. WCU scored seven of the next nine points though before the Blue Raiders responded with a 3-pointer from Pickel and a turnaround jumper in the lane by Brown. Brown and Lymon both hit a pair of 3-pointers in the half and Holt was 7-of-8 from the field for 16 points. Queen also grabbed

seven of the team's 22 rebounds. The Blue Raiders pushed the lead to as many as 39 in the second half after WCU began to press, opening driving lanes and kickouts for shooters. The 13 3-pointers were the second most for Middle Tennessee in a game this season and the ninth contest with double-digit trifectas in 2007-08. **BRAA BUS TRIP SCHEDULED:** The BRAA is offering a bus trip to Lexington, Ky., for Friday's contest against Kentucky. Cost is $55 per person and there MUST be at least 30 people sign up for the trip before the bus will go. The bus will depart Murfreesboro at 11 a.m. Friday for the game. Call the BRAA office at 615/898-2210 to sign up. **POSTGAME NOTES**
A GAME OF HIGHS FOR RAIDERS: The squad posted its highest point total of the season and the most since netting 103 versus Louisiana-Monroe on December 17, 2006. It is the most since the team recorded 108 points versus Morehead State on February 19, 1996. Middle Tennessee is now 26-7 all-time when scoring more than 100 points ... The Blue Raiders handed out 23 assists, the second most this season for the club ... The 51 first-half points was the second most this season in the first half. The Blue Raiders posted 58 in the opening period versus Tennessee Tech on November 14 ... Middle Tennessee tied a season-high with 36 field goals in the contest, set a season-best by shooting 59 percent from the field (36-for-61) and also hit 19-of-20 free throws, a season-high 95 percent ... Anne Marie Lanning broke out of her shooting slump, hitting a pair of 3-pointers and finishing 4-for-7 from the field for 10 points. Lanning was 0-for-8 over the last four-plus games from behind the arc before making her second attempt of the contest. **HOLT ADDS TO THE RECORDS:** Senior Amber Holt continued to add to her season records, recording her 13th 30-point game of the year with 30 points along with nine rebounds. She passed Sherry Tucker (1,452 points, 1992-95) as well as Sharon McClanahan (1,464 points, 1976-79) and Stephanie Capley (1,464 points, 1988-91) for ninth on the career scoring list. Holt now has 1,465 career points. She posted her 20th outing this season with eight or more rebounds and collected four assists in the victory as well, her 14th contest this season with four or more assists. **ORR BREAKS OUT:** Senior Starr Orr posted one of her best games of the season, scoring 12 points. Orr was 6-for-12 from the field, the second most shots she's taken all season, and tied her season-best with six makes. It was just the fourth double-figure scoring outing of the season and the first since January 24 at Louisiana-Monroe, a span of 13 games. The Danville, Ala., native scored eight of her 12 points in the second half. **QUEEN STAYS ON THE BOARDS:** Freshman Emily Queen continued her tremendous work on the glass for the Blue Raiders, posting her fifth double-figure rebounding outing of the season with 10 boards in the victory. It was the first double digit effort for Queen since grabbing 10 rebounds versus North Texas on January 26, a span of 12 contests, and was also her 14th outing this year with seven or more caroms. The Ashland, Ky., native just missed her third double-double of the season, scoring nine points in 22 minutes of action. **BROWN COMES OUT OF HER SHELL:** Sophomore Brandi Brown played one of her most complete games of the season in the victory and posted her best effort since returning from injury in late January. Brown scored 13 points with four rebounds and four assists, hitting 5-of-8 shots from the field, including three 3-pointers. She also had a nice fadeaway jumper in the lane in the first half and a drive down the baseline in the second half. It was her first double-figure scoring effort since December 22 at South Alabama and only her fifth of the season. The Jamestown, Tenn., native had scored just 56 points in 11 games since returning from her broken hand. **RAIDERS FIND MARK FROM BEHIND THE ARC:** After suffering through one of its worst shooting performances in its last outing and the worst shooting effort of the season in the first meeting of the season with Western Carolina, Middle Tennessee found the range from behind the arc, knocking down 13-of-25, including three each from Chelsia Lymon, Brandi Brown and Jackie Pickel along with a pair from Anne Marie Lanning. The 13 3-pointers were the second most for Middle Tennessee in a game this season and the ninth contest with double-digit trifectas in 2007-08. It was the first double figure effort since making a season-best 14 at Louisiana-Lafayette on January

30, a span of 11 contests. Middle Tennessee now has 24 games over the last three seasons with double digit 3-pointers. **POSTGAME QUOTES**

Head Cach Rick Insell

On tonight's win

"It looks like we like the WNIT. We were rested. You could tell in practice our minds were flushed coming back from that seven-day layoff. We didn't do anything until yesterday. They had spring in their step, they were more alert in their eyes, and they were loose and shooting the ball well." **On tonight's offensive performance**

"Let's hope we've got some more of that in us. I was really proud of all of them. They played together, they played hard with passion, and that's what we've been looking for. I'd like to put five more games like this together. We had some letdowns late on defense, but I'll take what we did offensively." **On recording 23 assists in the game**

"It's not uncommon for us [to have a lot of assists]. We share the ball. Amber [Holt] gets most of our shots but even she shares the ball too much for everybody. Brandi Brown is as pure of a shooter as I've ever coached, and we have to beg and plead with her to shoot. Sometimes we're too unselfish." **On their next opponent**

"Kentucky's got a good team. They're big and they've had some rest, but look who we've played. Not to take anything away from them, because they finished fourth in the SEC, but I don't think we'll be intimidated." **Senior forward Amber Holt**

On the team's mindset

"We came out hungry, but we were also more relaxed. Normally we come out a little tentative, but tonight we just had fun. That's what we've got to do from here on out. **Sophomore forward Brandi Brown**

On the importance of rest

"We had a few days off to rest and we came back strong. We've never come out this relaxed and enjoyed it as much as we did tonight. Hopefully we can do it again in the next game." **On the next game**

"It's just an opportunity to get better. This whole tournament is providing us with more experience. We've played some big games at Tennessee and Maryland, so we should be fine playing at Kentucky. It'll be good for us." **Western Carolina head coach Kelly Harper**

On tonight's loss to Middle Tennessee

"There are two women's teams playing and only one is going to win. It puts a sour taste on your season. Obviously, this is not the way we wanted to end our season. We are going to look back at this game for a long time. We have to reflect on the type of team that we had. I don't know if we can duplicate what we did this year and get that many wins. We are trying to encourage our players to look past this and look at the type of season they had." **On trailing 51-26 at the half**

"We were playing so tentatively on offense. We looked scared to shoot it and scared to score. We looked intimated in the first half. Everything they shot was going in. I told the kids, it's not a good night to have your worst game against a team that possibly had their best game of the season. It was a bad night to do that." **On Middle Tennessee's 13 made 3-pointers**

"The problem early on was that we couldn't score with them. They give you the same problem that Chattanooga gives you. Are you going to guard Amber Holt or their 3-point shooters? They don't shoot that well at the 3-point line. We had so many breakdowns. We weren't very sharp offensively and defensively. They made baskets. You are going to give up baskets and they made them." **On the seniors last game at Western Carolina**

"They need to try to look at the positives. They have been the most successful kids in this program history. It's hard for them to understand. It's going to take a while. It's sitting hard on them right now.

It's tough as a coach because I'm mad and disappointed. At the same time, I have to go in and comfort these kids because it's their last game in a purple uniform."

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