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Six Blue Raiders tally double figures in 116-41 triumph

Women's basketball convincing in final exhibition game; Opens season Saturday

Athletic Communications

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee women's basketball team ended its two-game exhibition season with a dominating 116-41 victory over Lincoln Memorial Monday at the Murphy Center.

The Blue Raiders put six players in double figures, including all five starters. They were led by [Alysha Clark](#), who posted her second-straight 30-point outing to begin her Middle Tennessee career. Clark also poured in 30 points in the exhibition opener last Monday against Kentucky Wesleyan.

Middle Tennessee started with an 11-0 run featuring six points by Clark before Andi Winney halted the spurt at 16:54. The home crowd was on its feet for over three minutes as the Lady Raiders forced four early turnovers. Middle Tennessee, which pick-pocketed Kentucky Wesleyan for 40 ball changes last week, put the defensive clamps on the Railsplitters tonight and came away with 33 turnovers.

Just before the second media timeout of the opening stanza at 11:36, [Anne Marie Lanning](#) added eight consecutive points, including a pair of 3-pointers, as Middle Tennessee built its advantage to 23, 30-7. Her first triple started a 20-7 run over the next five minutes, giving the Raiders a 42-12 lead with 7:46 to play in the half.

Back-to-back lay-ups by Dayshalee Salaman and Cena Nasiloski pulled Lincoln Memorial within 27, 43-16, with 6:55 remaining; however, the Railsplitters would not get closer the rest of the contest. Six of the final eight points in the half were converted from the foul line and Middle Tennessee took a 67-25 advantage into the half.

Clark then again seized control of the post and netted 12 of the team's opening 22 markers to open the second half and provide the Blue Raiders with a 59-point edge, 92-33. [Molly McFadden](#) registered four points over the next two-and-a-half minutes, including a pair of free throws to push Middle Tennessee over the century mark, 101-37, at 8:57.

The Blue Raiders held the Railsplitters to six points over the final 10 minutes, including the game's final field goal, a 3-pointer from Stephane Wagner, with 15 seconds to play.

Clark led all players with her 30 points and was followed in double figures by teammates [Emily Queen](#) (16), [Jackie Pickel](#) (15), [Chelsia Lymon](#) (14), [Brandi Brown](#) (14) and Lanning (10).

Lanning hauled in a game-best eight rebounds, featuring seven defensive boards, as Middle Tennessee posted a 43-31 advantage on the glass. The Blue Raiders hit 43-of-80 (53.8 percent) from the field and 16-of-32 (50.0 percent) from behind the 3-point arc.

Salaman led Lincoln Memorial with 17 points on 7-of-16 field goals. She was joined in double digits by Wagner, who contributed 11 markers. Winney gathered a team-high five rebounds. The Railsplitters hit 14-of-42 (33.3 percent) field goals and just 3-of-17 (17.6 percent) from behind the 3-point line.

Middle Tennessee will next play when it opens the regular season with a Preseason WNIT matchup against Lafayette College at 7 p.m. Saturday inside the Murphy Center.

Middle Tennessee Postgame Quotes

Head Coach Rick Insell

On tonight's shooting:

"A lot of people were concerned about our shooting but I'm not. We have touch and good mechanics. There are going to be nights when we don't put the ball in the basket, and that's when we have to play better defense. All we've been concentrating on is our defense. We got a little better defensively tonight. There were some breakdowns but I was trying a lot of combinations so we didn't get anyone hurt. I was satisfied with the new girls too."

On [Jackie Pickel's](#) preparation:

"The preparation wasn't any different. We didn't focus on the teams; we focused on what we need to do as a team. We're going to



Jackie Pickel poured in five 3-pointers in Middle Tennessee's 116-point outburst against Lincoln Memorial. (B. Lambert)

have to play Tennessee and LSU and that's what I'm focused on. We have to be able to carry our fundamentals right to a tee to be successful against those teams."

On keeping the team focused for second half:

"I don't think the score was mentioned at halftime. I think we talked about rebounding, we were only outrebounding them by one at halftime. Plus [Emily Queen](#) had three turnovers and we weren't happy with that. We shot the ball well, especially from 3-point, but free throws was not good. But we forced 33 turnovers so that's good."

Junior guard [Jackie Pickel](#)

On tonight's performance:

"It's a definite confidence builder. After last game I was down but Coach (Rick) Insell is so good about not letting us get too low. When the first shot is in it's a totally different mindset."

On preparation for tonight:

"It was the same. You can't put too much pressure on yourself or you'll have another bad night. You just have to go out there and shoot and play hard and get in the rhythm of the game."

On the team's quickness this season:

"I think we all worked hard over the summer on our quickness and defense. The last two years we had such an offensive threat we were all just role players. But this year we all have a role and rebound and play defense. So I think we're all just playing together."

Junior forward [Alysha Clark](#)

On tonight's performance:

"I was definitely better than last week; it's just taking me some time to get into a rhythm. It's a good feeling to know that I'm working my way back."

On getting the season started:

"I'm so excited. These exhibition games have been fun but I'm definitely ready to play real games that count for the record."

On tonight's defense:

"It's ok, I still need to work. I'm never going to be really satisfied with my defense because I know it needs a lot of work. It will take more than a week to get it to where Coach Insell wants it to be and where I can go out and pressure and not get tired. I think once I get back into game shape I'll be better than I have been the last two games."

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