Middle Tennessee mounts comeback win over Indiana

Blue Raiders hit 8-of-10 free throws down the stretch to seal the victory.

November 22, 2008 · Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee women's basketball found itself trailing by 20 in the first half but never surrendered and mounted a second-half comeback for a thrilling 65-59 victory over Indiana in Preseason WNIT action Saturday night inside the Murphy Center in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

The Blue Raiders struggled during the early stages of the game, connecting on only four of their first 15 shots (26.7 percent), while the Hoosiers hit six of their first 11 when the teams entered the second media timeout at 11:22. Indiana (1-2) ended up converting 15 of its opening 21 attempts (71.4 percent) before finishing the first half 16-of-24 (66.7 percent) and opening a 14-point cushion, 36-22.

MT's Anne Marie Lanning drilled a 3-pointer with 12:04 to play in the opening stanza to pull the Blue Raiders within one, 11-10, but Haylie Linn scored a bucket on IU's next offensive possession to start a 19-0 Hoosier run over the next five-and-a-half minutes for a 30-10 advantage. Jamie Braun tallied three-straight baskets for the Hoosiers as part of her 7-of-7 start from the field.

Chelsia Lymon put an end to the spurt with back-to-back 3-pointers, the first coming at 6:02. Middle Tennessee's leading scorer entering the game, Alysha Clark, was limited to just 13 minutes during the opening period due to foul trouble. Lymon stole the ball and raced down court for a layup with 20 seconds to play to close the half and bring the Lady Raiders within 14, 36-22, at the break.

Brandi Brown drilled a triple at 18:09 of the second half to begin the scoring after intermission. Emily Queen added a pair of layups, followed by 3-pointers from Brown and Lanning to bring the deficit to five, 40-35. Lanning then converted a jumper and Brown knocked down her third trey of the half at 12:34 to draw Middle Tennessee (2-1) even, 40-40.

Lymon swished a 3-pointer from the wing at 11:39 to give the Lady Raiders their first lead, 43-40. After Amber Jackson hit a pair of free throws 21 seconds later to pull Indiana within one, 43-42, Lanning added another basket to push the lead back to three.

An old-fashioned three-point play by the Hoosiers' Kim Roberson at 9:28 tied the game for the second time and her layup off her own steal on the Lady Raiders' next possession gave IU a 47-45 edge as the teams crossed the nine-minute mark.

The two teams went back and forth over the next six minutes with IU's Whitney Thomas tying the game one last time, 56-56, at the 3:10 mark. Clark hit 1-of-2 free throws at 2:49, part of an 8-of-10 effort from the charity stripe over the final stretch for MT, to give the Blue Raiders the lead for good.

Lymon finished with a game-high 19 points, including converting all six of her free throw attempts. Lanning was one point behind her teammate with 18 points, including four 3-pointers, and Brown gave the Lady Raiders a trio in double figures with 11 points.

Queen finished with a game-best eight rebounds helping MT to a 38-to-27 edge on the glass.

Braun, after hitting her first seven shots, missed her last three but still finished with game-high honors for IU with 16 points. Roberson added 14, Jackson contributed 11 and Jori Davis poured in 10. Thomas grabbed a team-best seven rebounds, including six defensively.

Middle Tennessee will continue its three-game homestand with a 7 p.m. Tuesday matchup against in-state foe Chattanooga inside the Murphy Center.

MT vs. Indiana Quotes
Coach Insell
On early timeouts
"They were in a match-up zone. They play it very well and a lot like Kelly Hall did at Lafayette. They were cutting lanes and didn't have anyone inside. We weren't having any success offensively so we had to go to something else. We went back to something we had in the bag to deal with that zone. We first put it in at one of those timeouts but we really talked about it at halftime. We wanted Emily Queen to really play hard in the post and when she did, it opened up our outside shooters. I'm so happy for our players. They played with such passion and heart. We could have given up but we didn't, and I think that says a little bit about this basketball team."

On toughness of game
"It came down to effort. Chelsia Lymon was out there playing the whole game. We don't want to have to play her like that but right now, Tina Stewart didn't need to be in that situation. We needed

Chelsia to be in there leading us. And in the end we were able to make free throws. We made a lot of them down the stretch."

On playing without Alysha Clark again

"I've said all along we've got six ladies who can really play. We're very fortunate we're in that situation. We needed this win tonight against Indiana. Getting into the tournament may come down to a win in this game. They'll place high in the Big Ten and probably make the NCAA Tournament, so they're RPI is going to be high. So this was a big win against a big opponent."

On next game against Chattanooga

"(Head coach) Wes (Moore) does a great job in causing a lot of teams match-up problems. We're going to have to study some film and go hard in practice. We have this game plus the game against Arizona that will be tough."

Chelsia Lymon on first half

"Well I never really looked up [at the scoreboard] because I just wanted to play basketball. We got into the locker room and I really didn't know what the score was. I knew we were down but Coach kept preaching that we needed to get something positive out of every possession. We started clicking in the second half. It started getting nasty out there and told my teammates we're not getting pushed around in our house."

On the steal in second half

"She was looking over my head and just dribbling out in front of me. I thought if she was going to do that then this was the time for a steal and it just lifted our team."

Anne Marie Lanning

On running a new play

"In the first half he (Coach Insell) called the new play and we didn't know what he was talking about cause we haven't run it in practice this year. When we went in at halftime he showed us on the board what he wanted and we ran it pretty much the whole second half."

On being successful with many looks

"We knew the way they were spreading out their defense the middle was open in the first half. So we ran the new play and then the outside players started getting looks as well."

On the physicality of the game

"In the first half Chelsia told us they weren't going to come in here and beat us up on our floor and we were kind of laying down in the first half, but we came out in the second half and put it to them. It was really physical."

Indiana Hoosiers Head Coach Felisha Legette-Jack

Opening statement

"It was a great game. It was a competitive game. It was a great game to watch. When two teams compete as ours did, it's not going to be easy for anyone to walk away with a major spread. Take hats off to Middle Tennessee. They protect their home very well. Our guys played tough as well." On taking a 20-point lead in the first half "We were attacking. We didn't worry about the press. In the second half, we decided to look at their press. It was a big monster. It was just five people out there still. This is a lesson we can learn and I think we will be better for it."

On four players scoring double digits

"We're going to get better. Right now, we were six points too little. We will continue to work on some things and get better."

On if there were any positives from the loss

"You can complain when you lose. We are losing. We don't like moral victories. And we are not a team that is trying to do that. We are trying to scrap our way past Middle Tennessee, a team that is vying to get into position for the NCAA Tournament. We will continue to scrape and claw and we won't allow anyone to give us a moral victory. 52 percent (field goal percentage) wasn't high enough."

Printed on May 23, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/35694