

December 7, 2008

## Men's basketball goes inside to storm past SIU-E, 80-51

Yates, Haddock combine for 44 points

*Athletic Communications*

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**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** - Middle Tennessee relied on inside strength as forwards [Desmond Yates](#) and [Montarrio Haddock](#) helped the Blue Raiders (3-3) muscle past SIU-Edwardsville, 80-51, at Murphy Center Sunday afternoon.

Yates and Haddock combined for 44 of the team's 80 points and the inside tandem made the most of their minutes to enjoy season-high performances. Yates scored a season-high 25 points in 21 minutes on 11-of-16 shooting. Haddock enjoyed a career night in his early but blossoming Blue Raider career. The transfer poured in a career-high 19 points on 8-of-10 shooting and yanked a game-high nine rebounds in 24 minutes.

[Demetrius Green](#) also continued his dynamic start with 12 points, five rebounds and four assists. He has scored double figures in 14 straight dating to last season and is averaging 15 points in his first four games this season. [Eric Allen](#) added six points, while [Kevin Kanaskie](#) and [Calvin O'Neil](#) finished with five. O'Neil tied Haddock for game-high rebound honors with a career-best nine caroms, including four on the offensive end.



Junior forward Montarrio Haddock scored a career-high 19 points and had a game-high nine rebounds in Sunday's win. (MT)

The game also featured milestone performances. Yates went over the 950-point mark for his career and moved past Pancakes Pery for 29th on the career scoring list with 959. He notched his 49th career double figure scoring game and led the team in scoring for the 30th time. Kanaskie also made a move in his pursuit of the top spot on the career assists list. The senior dished out five helpers for 402 for his career, moving past Richard Duncan and becoming only one of three players in program history to collect 400 or more in a career. Kanaskie is 61 assists from Gerald Harris mark of 463.

SIU-Edwardsville (2-7) kept it close early but the Blue Raiders, playing without seniors [Nigel Johnson](#) (knee) and [Theryn Hudson](#) (foot), continued their defensive assault and essentially wore the Cougars down. Aamir McCleary's jumper for SIU-E tied the game 22-22 with 7:06 remaining in the first half.

The rest of the game belonged to Middle Tennessee.

The Blue Raiders combined smothering defense, outstanding board work and precision offense to break the game open. Yates and Haddock scored eight points each and Middle Tennessee closed the half with a 17-2 run to open a commanding 39-24 lead at the intermission. The Blue Raiders maintained their defensive intensity throughout the second half and never allowed the Cougars to get to within closer than 26 in the final 20 minutes.

Middle Tennessee continued its improved rebounding. The Blue Raiders dominated the rebounding battle, 50-28, getting 19 offensive rebounds in the process. It marks the third time this season the Blue Raiders have 45 or more rebounds in a game and represents outstanding team rebounding as Middle Tennessee has been without the services of Hudson, its 6-10 center.

The Blue Raiders also outshot the Cougars, shooting 45 percent. Middle Tennessee improved to 32-1 when scoring 80 or more points under Head Coach Kermit Davis. They have won 17 straight when scoring 80 or more.

Middle Tennessee opens Sun Belt Conference action against Troy at the Murphy Center Thursday at 7 p.m.

### Middle Tennessee Postgame Quotes

Middle Tennessee Head Coach Kermit Davis

#### On today's game:

"I thought SIU-Edwardsville did a great job of running their offense and going to the middle. I just think they're team got tired and worn down, but they came out strong and had us on our heels. I think though for the last 28 minutes or so of the game we defended well and held them to 37 percent. We had 17 offensive rebounds against Houston and 19 today so we're starting to become a better rebounding team and that's a positive."

#### On turning defense around late in first half:

"I just thought we were more active. [Desmond Yates](#) came out in the first half and he wasn't very active. He wasn't helping on defense very well but when we got everyone going it was much better. It was a team defensive effort. I thought even the guys off

the bench did a good job."

**On [Montarrio Haddock](#):**

"We've been telling [Montarrio Haddock](#) that he's been really close to breaking out. It was good to see him play with that energy and intensity."

**On Montarrio's rebounding:**

"We keep rebounds every day and he and [Eric Allen](#) led us in rebounding in our last physical practice so that's a big reason Montarrio started and that's why Eric was one of the first guys off the bench, and I thought he played better too. He's going to start making shots, he just has to keep shooting."

**Junior forward [Desmond Yates](#)**

**On the differences between Yates and Haddock:**

"Montarrio likes to go off the dribble more than I do. We can both go inside or outside. We go hard against each other in practice every day and now I think we know what each other likes to do so if I'm there to set the tone he'll be there to back me up."

**[Montarrio Haddock](#)**

**On having his best game so far:**

"Coach said if I practice hard I'll play hard. I felt really comfortable out there and Desmond really helped open things up for me."

**On improved rebounding:**

"Those are easy baskets when you get offensive rebounds and put them back up. And maybe you can get fouled too. That's an important part of the game and I work to be active and do my best to help the team."

**On improved intensity**

"Coach (Davis) has been telling me I'm really soft and getting on me about it so I had to prove him wrong. They keep giving me chances and I have to make the most of them."

**SIU-Edwardsville Head Coach Lennox Forrester**

**On Middle Tennessee's [Desmond Yates](#):**

"I think 25 points in 21 minutes says it all. He is very talented and they use him well in their system. He can step out and shoot the 3-pointer, score down low, get offensive rebounds and run the floor. He is really good and was obviously tough to stop today."

**On their early scoring success:**

"We were trying to attack a little more off the dribble. I know that they are very good team defensively and I thought if we did a good job moving the ball whether by driving or passing that we could create some problems for them. They did a better job in the second half with switching a lot of things that really helped stop our baseline penetration."

**On their season thus far:**

"You look back at our early success where we played well and we were playing in a tournament with two weeks of practice. Now it is further along in the season and teams are going to be better prepared. It is a lot easier to score a bit more and do things when no one has scouted you as much. Now teams are getting locked in. We are getting better but other teams are too."

**On the depth of Middle Tennessee:**

"They have great athletes that get after it pretty good and play hard. They wore us down. We turned the ball over offensively and did not take good shots. They were rebounding the ball well offensively and pushing it when they rebounded defensively. That caused us a lot of problems."

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