Championship effort lands Green, Yates on All-Tournament team

Yates named MVP at Basketball Travelers Tip-Off Tourney

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SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - Sun Belt Conference Preseason Player of the Year Desmond "Boogie" Yates put on a three-game clinic that awed fans and turned heads at the Basketball Travelers Tip-Off Classic at JQH Arena during the weekend. His performances throughout the weekend also earned Middle Tennessee's high-scoring forward Most Valuable Player honors after the Blue Raiders swept the field and capped an impressive weekend with a 63-51 win against host Missouri State in the championship game Monday. Yates and senior guard Demetrius Green were named to the five-person all-tournament team after the Blue Raiders won all three games by double figures, marking the first time Middle Tennessee has swept a three-game in-season tournament since 1956. "We had so many different players step up throughout this tournament and it's a shame more couldn't be all-tournament because there were several who deserved it but (Yates and Green) had quality games and definitely deserved the honor. Kevin (Kanaskie) and Nigel (Johnson) did not make the all-tournament team but they were big keys to our success throughout the weekend. They were just solid and that's the biggest thing." Yates led the tournament in scoring (20.7) and field goal percentage (70 percent) and was tied for third for 3-point field goal percentage (50 percent). Green also enjoyed a productive weekend. His 14 points per game were fourth in the tournament. He was tied for third in 3-point field goal percentage on the strength of 5-of-10 shooting beyond the arc and his 55 percent shooting clip in three games was fifth. He also averaged 1.3 steals to tie for fourth in that category. Yates continued to make a move on the all-time scoring list throughout the tournament and moved up another spot with a game-high 22 points on 10-of-13 shooting against Missouri State in the championship game. He passed Chris Harris for 22nd on the all-time scoring list and now has 1,082 points and needs eight more to move into 21st. Kevin Kanaskie also is on the doorstep of the 1,000-point club. He scored six against Missouri State and needs one to become the 29th member of the 1,000-point club at Middle Tennessee. Kanaskie enjoyed a stellar all-around tournament, as did Nigel Johnson, Montarrio Haddock and Eric Allen,

who made great strides throughout the three-day tournament. Kanaskie was Middle Tennessee's leading rebounder in the event with 5.7 overall - good for fifth among the field. The backcourt tandem of Johnson and Kanaskie was a formidable one-two punch in terms of setting up teammates. Johnson led the tournament in assists with 5.7 per game and Kanaskie was third with 3.3 helpers per game. O'Neil led the tournament in steals with 2.3 per game and Green and Montarrio Haddock tied for fourth with 1.3 per game. Allen enjoyed his best three-day stretch, giving Middle Tennessee quality minutes, good defense and he seemed to find his shooting touch with four field goals, including a 3-pointer, in Monday's title game. His improved play came at an important time as guard Antwaun Boyd suffered a dislocated shoulder in Friday's practice and was unavailable throughout the weekend.

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