

Lady Raiders send seniors out in style with victory over FIU

February 26, 2005 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Middle Tennessee made sure it went into the upcoming Sun Belt Tournament on a high note and guaranteed its seniors went out in style as the Lady Raiders turned back Florida International, 67-58, in front of 726 in the regular-season finale at Murphy Center Saturday afternoon.

Seniors Patrice Holmes, Ditte Jakobsen and Ciara Gray combined for 31 points, nine assists and five steals in their Murphy Center farewell as Middle Tennessee concluded the regular season with a 19-8 overall mark, 11-3 in the SBC, while also avenging an earlier loss to the Golden Panthers (17-9, 7-6).

Holmes, one of the best all-around players in program history, led all scorers with 20 points, dished out five assists, swiped four steals and blocked two shots. Tia Stovall added 14 points and six rebounds, while Krystle Horton finished with 12 points and nine rebounds to lead the Lady Raider charge. Sophomore Chrissy Givens dished out a career-high seven assists as the Lady Raiders had 18 helpers for the game.

Middle Tennessee, which shot 51 percent (25-of-49) from the field and 50 percent (5-of-10) from 3-point range, demonstrated the grit and determination that has enabled it to have another sterling season under Head Coach Stephany Smith by turning up the defense and executing on the offensive end to overcome a 50-43 deficit with 10:11 remaining.

Gray knocked down a long 3-pointer to ignite Middle Tennessee's comeback and then she connected for a free throw on the Lady Raiders next offensive possession to trim the deficit to 50-47 with 9:10 remaining. Holmes gave Middle Tennessee the lead for good when she made the second of two free throws with 4:55 remaining to stake the team to a 55-54 lead.

By the time Florida International could regroup, Middle Tennessee had used a 9-0 run to take a 62-

54 lead on Holmes' layup at the 3:35 mark and the Golden Panthers would get no closer than five the remainder of the game. The Lady Raiders stormed out to a 9-1 lead as Jakobsen scored seven of the team's first nine points and Middle Tennessee controlled the first 11 minutes of the opening half.

The Lady Raiders led 30-18 after Horton completed a three-point play with 9:09 remaining, but they managed just three points the remainder of the first half as Florida International climbed to within 33-28 at the intermission.

Middle Tennessee will carry the No. 3 seed from the East Division into the SBC Tournament unless Western Kentucky loses to Florida International Monday night, at which time a coin flip would be necessary to determine the No. 2 seed.

2004-05 MIDDLE TENNESSEE BASKETBALL POSTGAME NOTES Middle Tennessee vs Florida International Feb. 26, 2005; Murfreesboro, TN

HOLMES GOES OUT IN STYLE: Senior Patrice Holmes, who played her final regular season home game today, sent her Blue Raider home career out in style with a game-high 20 points to lead Middle Tennessee to a victory over FIU. It marked the first time since registering 28 points at New Orleans on Jan. 20 that Holmes has topped the 20-point mark and the 27th time she has accomplished the feat during her career. Holmes also added three three-pointers, five assists and four steals.

HOLMES TIES FOR MOST GAMES PLAYED: Senior Patrice Holmes played in her 118th career game today against FIU to tie Natalie Sneed and Jonelda Buck for the all-time Lady Raider record. Holmes will own the record outright if she competes in the SBC Tournament next week.

HOT IN FEBRUARY: Under Stephany Smith, the Lady Raiders are now an impressive 45-15 (.750) in the month of February.

11 SBC WINS: Today's victory over FIU gave Middle Tennessee its 11th Sun Belt win of the season, which is the most regular season SBC wins in school history. The previous mark of 10 SBC victories was set in 2003-04. In fact, the Lady Raiders have now improved their SBC win total for three straight seasons. MT had nine wins in 2002-03, then racked up 10 in 2003-04 before upping that total to 11 this year.

PLAYER(S) OF THE GAME: Members of the working media voted the three Lady Raider seniors as the Alexander Automotive Family Players of the Game. Seniors Patrice Holmes, Ditte Jakobsen and Ciara Gray combined for 31 points, 10 rebounds, and nine assists to take the honor.

INSIDE THE PAINT: The Lady Raiders have now won 24 straight games on Senior Day with the last loss occurring in 1981 ... Chrissy Givens and Tia Stovall sang the National Anthem prior to today's game ... Givens dished out a career-best seven assists ... The Lady Raiders won today despite being outrebounded on the offensive glass, 20-7 ... Latoya Barclay equaled her personal-high with three rebounds off the bench.

QUOTES

MT Head Coach Stephany Smith

"I thought we were very aggressive for the first eight minutes of the half. Chrissy Givens gets whistled for her first foul, all of the sudden she takes five giant steps backwards, and then there goes

our defense. She is the leader of our defense. You take away the pressure on the point guard, and they started penetrating and picking us apart. We gave them way too many opportunities at the free throw line because of the penetration. The reason our percentages were better early was because we were getting fast break opportunities and lay-ups."

"I feel fortunate that we came on as strong as we did late. The three seniors contributed big factors at different times. They are three players that we are going to miss an awful lot in this program. Fortunately, the season is not over. The regular season is over. We still anticipate a lot of basketball to play."

"I feel good about going into the tournament. I didn't like the look on our faces at times tonight. That concerns me a little. I think I have to take it in stride because we played so poorly in Miami. After we played as well as we did Thursday night against Western Kentucky, I truly feel like this team thought that we were going to come out and basically do the same thing against Florida International. We just need to be very proud of the fact that we got this win because FIU is a very good basketball team. But, we feel good about the way we are playing right now."

MT Forward Krystle Horton

"With it being Senior Night and our last home game, it puts more pressure on the underclassmen to do their jobs. We wanted to come out and fight hard, especially for the seniors. At the end of the game, we had to fight back hard. We were not going to lose this game. Now, we have a lot of momentum going into the tournament."

Printed on August 2, 2014

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/3729>