Blue Raiders drop 88-79 decision to North Texas in SBC quarterfinals

Haddock's career-high 26 points leads Middle Tennessee

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HOT SPRINGS, Ark. - Middle Tennessee's quest for the SBC Championship was denied as the Blue Raiders dropped an 88-79 setback to North Texas in quarterfinal action at Summit Arena in Hot Springs, Ark., Sunday. Montarrio Haddock led Middle Tennessee (18-14) with a career-high 26 points and also added four rebounds and four assists with no turnovers in 25 minutes. Desmond "Boogie" Yates finished with 15 points and Eric Allen capped a strong late-season run with 11 points and a game-high eight rebounds. Demetrius Green finished with eight points and Calvin O'Neil added seven points and seven rebounds. The game brought to a close the collegiate career of seniors Kevin Kanaskie, Nigel Johnson and Green. "We didn't want it to end today and we certainly wanted to keep playing but it has been a joy to coach these guys," Middle Tennessee Head Coach Kermit Davis said. "These three seniors are going to graduate and they have made great contributions. We did enough offensively in this game today but we couldn't get defensive stops and you have to give the credit to North Texas. They are playing extremely well and they were very good offensively today." North Texas (20-11), which was led by Josh White's 27 points and 19 more from Tristan Thompson, shot 51 percent for the game, including a sizzling 70 percent (16-of-

23) to curtail Blue Raider runs in the second half. Middle Tennessee also was crisp from the field in the second half, shooting 56 percent (19-of-34) but the Blue Raiders were not as efficient in the first half and a slow start offensively proved costly as they were never able to put together consistent stops to make up their early deficit. The Blue Raiders hit just one of their first 14 field goal attempts - a Yates 3-pointer - in the game's first 11 minutes. Despite the sluggish start Middle Tennessee trailed by just three, 13-10, with 11:03 remaining in the first half. North Texas maintained its advantage and led 40-30 at the half and led wire-to-wire. The Blue Raiders could never get closer than six in the second half as North Texas always had an answer when Middle Tennessee tried to make a run.

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