Holmes' shot with 12 seconds left rescues Lady Raiders in overtime

March 6, 2005 · MT Media Relations

DENTON, Texas - Patrice Holmes' layup with 12 seconds remaining in overtime lifted Middle Tennessee to a 59-58 win over host North Texas in front of 1,438 at the Super Pit Sunday afternoon.

The win placed the Lady Raiders in the semifinals of the SBC Tournament, where they will face rival Western Kentucky Monday at 1:30 p.m., for the third straight year. The semifinal showdown also is a rematch of the last two SBC Tournament championship games.

"I think a big weight was lifted from us," said Lady Raider coach Stephany Smith, who notched win No. 150 of her career. "We feel fortunate to come out of here with the win and reach the semifinal round, but I thought our girls fought hard and did what they had to do in order to find a way to win."

Holmes led Middle Tennessee (21-8) with a game-high 24 points, pulled down 11 rebounds, blocked four shots and collected four steals in her 42 minutes of action, but no basket was bigger than her game winner with her team trailing 58-57 and time running down.

Middle Tennessee had a chance to win in regulation but Krystle Horton missed a layup with seven seconds remaining and the Mean Green (14-14) was unable to connect on a desperation shot at the buzzer. There was little question who was going to take the potential game winning shot at the end of overtime.

"At the end of regulation we were trying to get the ball inside and score or draw the foul," Holmes said. "At the end of overtime coach wanted to have the ball in my hands and see what I could do."

In addition to Holmes' 24 points, Chrissy Givens added 12 and Horton finished with nine. Tia Stovall contributed eight points in the win.

The Lady Raiders trailed 58-53 with 3:33 remaining in the extra period but scored the final six points

of overtime to secure victory. It was their strong defense that made the biggest difference. Middle Tennessee forced two straight turnovers and converted them into points to close to within 58-57 with 1:51 remaining on consecutive layups by Givens and Holmes.

It appeared Middle Tennessee was on its way to another easy win after rolling in its conference tournament opener against New Orleans. The Lady Raiders controlled the majority of the first half and owned a 22-10 lead with 7:26 remaining until intermission but that's when things started to unravel.

North Texas used a 17-0 run over the final 7:26 of the first half to gain momentum and carry a 27-22 lead into the locker room. Middle Tennessee was its worst enemy during the Mean Green run as it committed several turnovers and allowed North Texas to get into transition.

While North Texas used the 17-0 run to get back into the game, it was Middle Tennessee's 6-0 run at the end of overtime that mattered most.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE VS NORTH TEXAS QUARTERFINAL ROUND, SUN BELT CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT DENTON, TX; MARCH 6, 2005

SMITH NOTCHES 150: Middle Tennessee Head Coach Stephany Smith won her 150th career game today with the victory over North Texas in the quarterfinals of the SBC Tournament. Smith, who accomplished the feat in 223 games, is the second fastest in school history to reach the 150-win plateau. Smith is the third winningest coach in school history and needs just 11 more to tie Larry Inman for second.

HOLMES COMES UP BIG: Like she has done so many times in her storied Lady Raider career, senior Patrice Holmes stepped up when her team needed her most. Holmes, who had a monster statistical game, hit a spinning five-footer in the lane with a defender draped all over her with 12 seconds left to give the Lady Raiders a come-from-behind win. Holmes finished with her 12th career double-double by registering 24 points and 11 boards to go along with four blocks and four steals. Holmes' 24 points marked the 28th time in her career she has topped the 20-point plateau and the sixth time this season.

HOLMES IN SBC PLAY: Senior Patrice Holmes, a two-time winner of the league's Most Outstanding Tournament Player award, has scored 20 or more points in SBC tournament action five times in 10 games. Overall, Holmes is averaging 19.4 points and 8.1 rebounds all-time in the SBC Tournament.

GOING OVERTIME: Today's overtime victory against North Texas was the 30th extra period game in school history for the Lady Raiders. Middle Tennessee is now 14-16 all-time in overtime, including a 1-1 mark this season. The Lady Raiders have now played just two overtime games during the postseason and are a perfect 2-0 in those games. The other win came in 1986 as the Lady Raiders downed South Carolina in the NCAA Tournament, 78-77 - also by one point.

DEFENSE KEYING LADY RAIDERS IN TOURNEY: Middle Tennessee's two wins in this year's SBC Tournament have come about due to some tenacious defense. This year's team is already the all-time leader in steals with 381, but it has been solid in limiting field goals in this year's tourney. In the two games combined, Middle Tennessee has held the opposition to just 29.2 (33-113) percent shooting from the field, while forcing an average of 25.0 turnovers. Against North Texas, the Lady

Raiders allowed just one field goal in overtime and collected two straight steals to erase a five-point deficit.

MT IN THE TOURNEY: The Lady Raiders are now 9-3 all-time in the SBC Tournament and have won seven of the last eight.

IN THE PAINT: Patrice Holmes recorded a career-high four blocked shots against North Texas ... The Lady Raiders have won five straight SBC Tournament games ... MT has now reached the SBC Tournament semifinals three years in a row and three times overall in five years in the league ... This mark's the 10th time in school history the Lady Raiders have won at least 21 games in a season ... Middle Tennessee's 25 turnovers against UNT went down as the most ever by the Lady Raiders in the SBC Tournament ... The Lady Raiders won for just the third time this season when trailing at the half (3-5 overall) ... Middle Tennessee's bench was outscored 19-3 ... Tia Stovall's five blocked shots equaled the ninth most in a single-game at Middle Tennessee and was her career-best.

Printed on December 10, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/3775