

November 13, 2009

Blue Raiders open season with 93-73 win

Washington, Haddock post over 20 points

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee struggled early but when it found its footing ran away with a 93-73 win over King College to open the 2009-10 season.

Two players, senior [Montarrio Haddock](#) and junior [James Washington](#), led the team with 23 and 24 points respectively while freshmen [James Gallman](#) and [J.T. Sulton](#) recorded 18 and 14 points respectively to guide the Blue Raiders in the win.

Sulton was just three rebounds shy of a double-double in his first collegiate game as he had seven rebounds, five of which were on defense. The Yazoo City, Miss., native went 5 for 9 from the field and missed just one of his five free throws.

"It was a really good experience for our team. They threw every defense you can get thrown with brand new guards; 2-2-1 full court pressing after makes, 1-3-1 half court traps, zone in line of bounds and man to man. It showed early with our new guards because they never really got in a rhythm," head coach Kermit Davis said. "I thought it was a great learning experience and a good learning experience because we got behind by eight or nine. We had to play from behind, when it wasn't going well and we responded. With seven new players, they threw that many different things at us and we didn't handle it very well. I give credit to King College because they had us off balance. But we settled in and played better the last twenty five minutes."

As a team, Middle Tennessee pulled down 33 rebounds, 25 of which were on defense, with Haddock and senior [Theryn Hudson](#) adding six and five rebounds respectively.

As a team, Middle Tennessee shot 54.9 percent from the field and 59.1 percent from behind the arc. The Blue Raiders were 13 for 22 from the three-point line and just two three-pointers shy of breaking the school record of 15 for three-point field goals in a game.

Washington led the team from behind the arc as he was 5 for 6 while Gallman went 4 for 8. The Saint Louis, Mo., native missed just two shots from the field going 8 for 10 while Gallman was 5 for 9 from the field and a perfect 4 for 4 at the charity stripe.

"Coach mentioned at the beginning of the year this is the best shooting team he has ever had. We can shoot the ball really well and try to play inside out. In the first half, they had us scrambling and on our heels, but we regrouped at halftime and came out strong. We are a strong shooting team and teams are going to have to defend the arc really well against us," Washington said.

Free throw shooting also helped the Blue Raiders as they shot 80 percent going 24 for 30 with Haddock leading the way as he was 13 for 16.

After trailing most of the first half the Blue Raiders pulled ahead with 48 seconds left on the clock after a three-pointer by Emanuel.

Middle Tennessee trailed by as many as 10 with six minutes remaining before closing the gap and eventually taking the lead at the half.

Haddock led the team with 12 points at the half with Washington adding 11 as the only two players in double-digit figures.

As a team, Middle Tennessee shot 52 percent going 13 for 25 while going 7 for 11 from for a 63.6 percent.

The Blue Raiders started the second half out strong jumping out to a nine-point lead, 47-38. At the halfway mark, Middle Tennessee led by 13, 65-53, and increased it to 14 after two made free throws by Washington.

Middle Tennessee continued its scoring assault making it 84-66 with three minutes remaining in the game.

The Blue Raiders will be back in action on Sunday, Nov. 15 at 3 p.m. against Ohio in Athens, Ohio.



Freshman J. T. Sulton was just three rebounds shy of a double-double in his first collegiate game as he had seven rebounds, five of which were on defense. He went 5 for 9 from the field and missed just one of his five free throws recording 18 total points. (Bradley Lambert)

"Ohio University is a very solid MAC school. I've seen them on tape, I like their team and they have a good inside player average. A few of their best players have been suspended, haven't played and will be ready for our game," Davis said. "After that we go to Marshall, who I have also watched on tape, and their talent level is that of Western Kentucky's if not better. They will be one of the better teams in Conference USA. We have to be better and see how our team will respond on the road."

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