Blue Raiders fall to Aggies

Washington and Gallman high scorers

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GREENSBORO, N.C. - Middle Tennessee had 21 turnovers and shot just 30.4 percent from the field in a 65-56 loss to North Carolina A&T on Monday night. The Blue Raiders (2-3) trailed by three at the half and used an 11-0 run in the second to put it within one-point after losing by eight but could not put everything together at one time to pick-up the win. "We got every look but couldn't make any. We had open looks, shots that bounced off the rim and couldn't make cheap baskets. There were a number of unforced turnovers and their press was ok and North Carolina A&T played pretty well," head coach Kermit Davis said. Junior James Washington led the team with 17 points as he was 5 for 11 from the field while freshman J.T. Sulton and junior Trevor Ottley grabbed eight and six rebounds respectively on defense. Freshman James Gallman was the only other player in double-figures with 11. "Montarrio Haddock's energy level was down and anytime your leading scorer and rebounder doesn't help it is hard to win," Davis said. "We started Williams tonight because he has been aggressive under the basket but he didn't respond so we brought in John David Little and his effort was fine. We tried playing everyone; Trevor and James Washington battled tonight." As a team, Middle Tennessee went 17 for 56 from the field and 7 for 25 from the three-point line while NCAT (3-2) shot 40.7 percent and was 12 for 33 from behind the arc. Defensively, the Blue Raiders had 45 total rebounds with 15 of those coming on offense while the Aggies had 32 rebounds with just five on the offensive side of the ball. Middle Tennessee did perform well at the charity stripe making 15 of its 21 attempts for a 71.4 percent, marking the fourth time it has shot 70 percent or better from the line. At the first media timeout, the two teams were tied at four with a number of turnovers and missed opportunities between them. The Blue Raiders called a timeout after the Aggies scored six unanswered to pull ahead 10-7 and then called another one after NCAT hit two more three-pointers taking a 16-8 lead.

Middle Tennessee closed the gap but could not take control as NCAT took a three-point lead at the half, 27-24. Middle Tennessee shot just 29.6 percent from the field while the Aggies were 33.3 percent from the field. Washington led the team at the half with seven points while senior Calvin O'Neil and freshman John David Little added three each. The Aggies hit just one two-point field goal in the first half making seven three-pointers. Alston led the team with 12 points after going 4 for 6 from behind the arc. NCAT was 7 for 16 from behind the arc shooting 43.8 percent. NCAT used its momentum from the first half to begin the second half as it outscored the Blue Raiders 16-8 taking a 44-32 lead at the 12-minute media timeout. Middle Tennessee then mounted a comeback and after three three-pointers and an 11-0 run were within one point, 36-35. The Blue Raiders battled but a long scoring drought and multiple turnovers stalled the comeback and put them back down 55-49. Middle Tennessee did not have a field goal from the 6:32 minute mark to the 1:17 and had just two free throws during that time. The Blue Raiders will be back in action on Friday, Nov. 27 when they play host to Cumberland University at 7 p.m. in the Murphy Center.

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