

# Clark's double-double not enough at South Dakota State

## All-American led all players with 22 pts., 10 rebs.

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**BROOKINGS, S.D.** - Middle Tennessee fell behind early and could not recover in dropping an 87-61 decision at South Dakota State Sunday afternoon inside Frost Arena in Brookings, S.D. The Blue Raiders, fresh off one of their best shooting performances, managed to hit just 35.6 percent from the field, while the Jackrabbits torched the nets for 62.0 percent, including a 68.0 percent clip in the second half.

Middle Tennessee was led by redshirt senior All-American Alysha Clark's sixth double-double of the campaign with 22 points and 10 rebounds. She led all players in both categories. Fellow Preseason First Team All-Sun Belt honoree Brandi Brown also reached double figures with 13 points, including three of the team's five 3-pointers.

South Dakota State placed four players in double digits, including a team-high 17 by Ashley Eide. Maria Boever (13 points), Kristin Rotert (13), Jennie Sunnarborg (12) and Jill Young (11) also reached the plateau.

The Blue Raiders jumped out to a quick 4-0 edge, but the Jackrabbits responded with a 17-0 run over the next eight minutes to lead 17-4 before Brown's layup halted the spurt at 10:52. Three-pointers by Rotert, Sunnarborg and Young helped South Dakota State in its long run.

Middle Tennessee then used triples from Jackie Pickel and Brown to trim the deficit to nine, 21-12,



before Rotert rattled off five-straight points for the Jacks to push the advantage back to double digits, 26-13, at the under-eight minute media timeout.

Chelsia Lymon had a backcourt steal, while Dana Garrett drove to the hoop only to get fouled and made both free throws as the Blue Raiders continued their efforts in cutting into the largest lead of the half, 28-13. Garrett's charity tosses made it 28-17, but SDSU made the next two buckets.

Clark then tallied six of the team's final 11 points of the stanza, which also included a 3-pointer from Anne Marie Lanning at 1:28, but Eide netted four for South Dakota State (5-4) and Leah Dietel also added one additional basket before the intermission, as the Jackrabbits led 40-28 at the break.

Middle Tennessee began the second half a lot different than the first, using a pair of Brown triples to close within eight, 44-36, in under two minutes. Maria Boever then put in four straight points for the Jackrabbits but the Blue Raiders would not quit in their attempt at the comeback.

Clark continued to dominate the low block and Emily Queen added three free throws at 12:47 after getting fouled shooting a trey to close within 56-45. Young, however, hit a pair of 3-pointers over the next four minutes to counter five straight charity tosses by the Blue Raiders for a 66-54 score with 7:41 to play. Among the free throws was a pair from Brown after the South Dakota State bench was called for a technical foul at 9:23.

After Brown's free throws brought Middle Tennessee (4-4) within 10, 61-51, the Jackrabbits erupted for a 20-5 run, capped by a pair of Sunnarborg charity tosses over the next five-plus minutes to take an 81-56 lead with 3:44 remaining. The final five Blue Raider points were scored by three freshmen: Kortni Jones, Dymon Raynor and Icelyn Elie.

The Blue Raiders will return to action at 2 p.m. Sunday when they play host to Western Kentucky in the Sun Belt opener inside the Murphy Center. Middle Tennessee will not play for a week due to final exams of the fall semester.

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