Brown shoots, Queen rebounds Blue Raiders to win

Three players reach double-figure scoring

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JONESBORO, Ark. - Senior Brandi Brown nailed 6-of-7 triples and junior Emily Queen hauled in 13 rebounds for the second-straight game to carry the Middle Tennessee women's basketball team to its fifth consecutive victory by defeating Arkansas State, 75-65, Wednesday night inside the Convocation Center in Jonesboro, Ark.

Brown continued to find comfort in mid-week road conference games, pouring in a game-high 24 points and blocking both of the team's shots, to close within six of the 1,000-point plateau. Queen's 13 rebounds included nine on the defensive glass and helped MT hold a 41-34 advantage on the boards.

The first half featured both teams making runs. Ebonie Jefferson led the Red Wolves' attack early, netting the team's first seven points through the opening four-and-a-half minutes. Brown then hit her second-straight triple at 14:43, giving the Blue Raiders for good. Jackie Pickel and Brown added two more 3-pointers over the next five minutes as Middle Tennessee (9-4, 4-0 Sun Belt) pushed its advantage to 17-13.

The pair would tally the next two buckets, including Brown's fourth trey of the half, as the lead swelled to nine, 22-13. Sherina Scott put Arkansas State on her back, netting 10 of the team's next 11 points as the margin dwindled to five, as the Blue Raiders did not make a field goal the remainder of the period after Chelsia Lymon's triple at 6:27. The last points of the session came on a pair of

Icelyn Elie free throws with 15 seconds on the clock, putting MT ahead, 31-26, at the break.

Scott trimmed the gap to three to start the second half, but an old-fashioned three-point play by Pickel ignited a 10-0 Middle Tennessee surge, which included consecutive layups from Elie, for a 41-28 Blue Raider lead. Three-pointers from Shania Hurst kept Arkansas State (6-9, 1-3 Sun Belt) within shouting distance, but after a Lyndsey Schlap layup brought the deficit to eight, Brown knocked down another trey to push it back to double digits, 47-36.

The Blue Raider advantage hovered around 10 for the next four minutes until Dana Garrett hit 1-of-2 free throws and Pickel converted another triple to increase the margin to 14, 57-43, with 7:47 remaining. A pair of charity tosses from Shania Hurst helped the Red Wolves cut it back to 10, but the edge again reached 14 on an Anne Marie Lanning jumper with 4:49 left.

Arkansas State again took advantage of a MT scoring drought, outscoring the Blue Raiders 8-2 over the next three minutes to pull within eight, 67-59, on another set of Hurst free throws at the 1:47 mark. The game was stretched out during the final two minutes due to foul shots, allowing Middle Tennessee to seize the win.

Pickel with 15 points and Lymon with 12 gave the Blue Raiders three players in double-figure scoring.

Scott and Jefferson paced the Red Wolves with 18 points apiece, while Hurst chipped in 10. Schlap grabbed a team-high nine rebounds.

Middle Tennessee will continue action on the road in the Natural State when it plays at 4:30 p.m. Saturday in Little Rock, Ark., against UALR.

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