

Yates guides Blue Raiders in CIT

Senior scores 30 against Missouri State

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SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - Senior Desmond Yates scored 21-points in the second half to help give Middle Tennessee a shot at a win over Missouri State on Wednesday night but the Blue Raiders fell 87-79 in the first round of the CollegelInsider.com Tournament. Yates, who had struggle in recent weeks, ended the night with a season high 30-points after going 12-15 from the field and 4-5 from behind the arc. As a team, the Blue Raiders shot 53.6 percent from the field with senior Montarrio Haddock and junior James Washington adding 16 and 13 points respectively. "I thought our team showed a lot of heart. We got down 16 or 17 and cut it back within two. They made some incredible, incredible shots down the stretch. Offensively, we were sure good enough to win the game especially down the stretch,"



head coach Kermit Davis said. The Bears performed very well on the perimeter going 8-9 from behind the arc in the second half and shooting 60.4 percent overall from the field. MSU also had good bench play outscoring the Blue Raiders 23-10 on the bench. Haddock, who had a team high six rebounds, guided the defense as the team had 24 total rebounds. Middle Tennessee went 8-11 from the free throw line which aided the Bears in the win as they were 20-24 with Will Creekmore going a perfect 7-7 at the charity stripe. The two schools traded points to begin the half with the Blue Raiders taking a 9-6 lead at the first media timeout. Then Missouri State went on a 10-5 run for a 23-18 lead with six minutes on the clock. Middle Tennessee went on a 13-11 run to end the half and cut the lead to three, 34-31 at the break. Yates who got in early foul trouble reentered the game late in the half and led all scorers with nine points. Haddock aided the offense with six points of his own and had four of Middle Tennessee's 13 rebounds. The Blue Raiders outshot Missouri State 54.2 percent

to 53.8 percent from the field in the first half but the Bears had two more points off turnovers with eight. Emanuel opened the half with a three to tie the score at 34 and while the two teams matched each other shot for shot kept the Bears within one. The Bears used a 24-8 run to jump out to a 61-47 with 9:41 on the clock. The Blue Raiders battled and a trey by Yates put them within seven, 68-61, with under six minutes to play. Another three by Yates made it a two-point game, 68-66, but MSU quickly answered with three of its own to pull back out to five, 71-66, with about four minutes left on the clock. MSU never looked back from there keeping the pace and a two possession lead over the Blue Raiders for the remainder of the game. Middle Tennessee ends the 2009-10 season 19-14 overall and reached the postseason for the first time since 1989. The Blue Raiders also won a share of the Sun Belt Conference Championship for the first time in 20 years after posting a 13-5 league record. "I am going to really miss our seniors. They have done a lot for our school, are going to be graduates of Middle Tennessee but I am really excited about our future and the guys returning. Hopefully, this little bit of postseason can help us for next year," Davis said.

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