

# Blue Raiders win 82-70 after strong second half

## Five score in double figures; Charles, Ottley post career highs

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**MURFREESBORO, Tenn. –** Middle Tennessee used a big run late in the second half to propel it past Evansville 82-70 on Wednesday night in Murphy Center.

Five players scored in double figures in the win with senior Rod Emanuel posting a team high 15. After being scoreless in the first half, Emanuel went 5 for 7 from the field and 3 for 4 from behind the arc to aid the second half runaway.

“We played a really good team. Colt Ryan played as good a 20 minutes as we’ve seen. We gave him some easy looks, but then he made some tough looks, and then he made some other people better off the dribble, too, so he had a great half,” head coach Kermit Davis said. “The key to the game was when we switched to an extended 1-3-1 defense at halftime. At least it got them out of rhythm, and had other guys trying to make shots. Then we got into a real good flow, offensively, and we were a little bigger, and went back and offensive rebounded better. It was a really good second half for us. We got tested really hard.”



Middle Tennessee's (3-3) forwards also shined in the win with senior Trevor Ottley scoring a career high 14 points, junior Trevor Charles added a career high 12 points and junior Kyle Hunt added 11. R-sophomore Jason Jones rounded out the double-figure scorers with 10.

"Trevor Charles changes our team. He's been ill and this is the first night he's played for more than a few minutes. He's our most physical post. He makes us a different team; he's a guy with toughness that can score. Tonight was as good as I've seen Trevor play," Davis said. "Our returning guys carried us. Rod Emmanuel, Trevor Ottley, those are the guys who have to carry us. J. T. (Sulton), James Washington, those guys. But tonight I thought Rod and Trevor Ottley played real well in the second half."

Middle Tennessee shot 51.9 percent from the field in the game and 76.6 percent from the free throw line. The Blue Raiders outrebounded UE (2-2) 40 to 26 and had six steals in the game. UE's Colt Ryan scored 23 in the first half but Middle Tennessee contained him in the second half as he scored just eight.

Middle Tennessee and UE traded points to open play with neither taking more than a one-point lead. The Blue Raiders took a three-point lead after two made free throws by Hunt, 12-9, with 12 minutes remaining on the clock. Then a layup by Charles on the next possession made it five, 14-9.

The two teams continued to trade points knotting the score at 26 before UE pulled ahead by three, 29-26. Then the Purple Aces' Ryan hit a three-pointer making it 32-26 with right at four minutes remaining in the half.

UE continued to score while holding the Blue Raiders to just two free throws as it pulled ahead by eight, 36-28 with a minute to play. Charles made two free throws to cut the Purple Aces' lead to six, 36-30, at the half.

Charles, Hunt and Ottley led the Blue Raiders in scoring with seven at the half while UE's Ryan scored 23 going 5 for 7 from behind the arc to help give his team the lead. The Blue Raiders shot 45.5 percent in the first half and out rebounded UE 16 to 13.

With the scored tied at 46, Emanuel hit a trey from the left side to give Middle Tennessee a 49-46 lead. The team then took a 55-50 lead after a layup by Washington with 11:36 on the clock. Then UE's Ryan hit his sixth three-pointer of the game and was fouled making it a one-point game, 55-54, after the free throw.

Middle Tennessee then went on a 9-1 run to take a nine-point lead, 64-55, at the eight minute media break. The Blue Raiders extended the run 17-3 for a 15-point lead, 72-57, at the four minute media timeout.

The Blue Raiders will have the rest of the week off for the Thanksgiving holiday and to prepare for its meeting with Tennessee in Knoxville, Tenn., on Tuesday, Nov. 30. The game with the Volunteers is set for 6:30 p.m. and will air on Fox Sports South.

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