Blue Raiders double attendance, realize fourth straight winning season

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Middle Tennessee enjoyed another successful season on the hardwood in 2005-06 as the Blue Raiders realized their fourth straight winning season and had an attendance increase for the fourth time in as many years under Head Coach Kermit Davis.

The Blue Raiders have averaged 17 wins per season under Davis, which is the best four-year mark since 1985-89 when Middle Tennessee averaged 20 wins per season. This influx of successful seasons on the court has translated into increased attendance at the turnstiles as Middle Tennessee's home attendance has doubled in Davis' first four seasons.

Middle Tennessee averaged 4,488 for its 14 home dates in 2005-06 - the highest attendance mark for the Blue Raiders in 15 years when they averaged 5,627 for 11 home dates in 1991-92. The Blue Raiders also averaged 4,843 for their eight Sun Belt Conference home games, including 5,156 in their final five. Middle Tennessee, which had the league's second-highest home attendance, drew a season-high 7,097 against Western Kentucky.

FUTURE IS BRIGHT: While Middle Tennessee played three freshmen - starting two of them in more than one-third of the games - and utilized the services of three other newcomers throughout the season, the Blue Raiders still enjoyed a successful campaign. Making the situation even better is the large amount of playing time the group gained throughout the season and the improvement made.

Middle Tennessee won 8-of-10 down the stretch with freshmen Kevin Kanaskie and Theryn Hudson starting at point guard and center, respectively. Additionally, freshman guard Calvin O'Neil saw action in each of those games. For the season, Kanaskie played in all 28 games and started 11. Hudson played in the 27 games in which he dressed (he missed one game due to a knee injury), drawing 10 starts, and O'Neil saw action in 21 games with one start.

Newcomers Bud Howard, Adam Vogelsberg and Tim Blue saw action in the majority of Middle Tennessee's games and will return for their senior seasons with a year of experience under their belt. Vogelsberg was Middle Tennessee's biggest impact player as he led the team in scoring (12.4) and was the Blue Raiders' only All-Sun Belt selection.

PRODUCTION RETURNS: After having to replace of bulk of its experience in 2005-06, Middle Tennessee fans have plenty of reason to get excited entering the 2006-07 campaign as the Blue Raiders return the bulk of their scoring, rebounding, assists and minutes from this season.

In all, Middle Tennessee returns 66 percent of its scoring, 71 percent of its rebounding, 66 percent of its assists and 69 percent of its minutes in 2006-07.

Vogelsberg is Middle Tennessee top returning scorer at 12.4 points per game, while Kyle Young is the team's top returning rebounder at 5.4 caroms a game; however, two other returning players - Howard and Blue - also averaged more than four rebounds per game. Kanaskie is the top assist man returning next season, having dished out 74 helpers to just 36 turnovers in his rookie season.

In all, Middle Tennessee returns 12 of 14 players in the program in 2005-06.

RECORD PERFORMANCES: Vogelsberg made history during his first season at Middle Tennessee in regard to both his free-throw shooting and 3-point accuracy.

The junior guard set the single-season record for free-throw percentage at 90.8 percent (108-119) and became the only player in program history to shoot 90 percent or better for a single season. Vogelsberg also is atop the career free-throw percentage list. Second on the list is Nod Carter's 83.6 percent.

Vogelsberg also finished second on the single-season 3-point field goals made list at Middle Tennessee with 67. His 41.7 percent shooting clip (68-163) from 3-point range is eighth on the single-season list and third on the career list.

Vogelsberg and Fats Cuyler teamed to become the most prolific 3-point tandem in school history with a combined 130 treys in 2005-06. The moved past former Blue Raiders Mike Dean and Tommy Gunn, who had 118 3-pointers in 2003-04. Cuyler also ended his career tied for seventh on the single-season 3-point field goals made list (62) and sixth on the career list with 114.

Kyle Young also had one of the best single-seasons of any Blue Raider in school history. Young's 65.1 shooting percentage was good for third on the single-season list and his 56.7 career percentage is fifth on the career list entering his senior season.

ANOTHER WINNING CAMPAIGN: Two seasons prior to Davis' hiring at Middle Tennessee the Blue Raiders were mired in a 5-22 season - worst in school history, but it hasn't taken long for the veteran coach to rekindle a winning spirit in Murfreesboro.

The Blue Raiders registered their fourth straight winning season under Davis in 2005-06, marking the first time Middle Tennessee has had as many consecutive winning seasons since 1985-89. In the process, Davis became on of two of Middle Tennessee's 19 head coaches to start his career with four straight winning seasons. Middle Tennessee's 68 wins in Davis' first four seasons are the second most for a Blue Raider coach after his first four seasons.

Middle Tennessee has won at least 16 games and produced a .500 or better record in conference play in each of the last four seasons, which the Blue Raiders had not accomplished since 1985-89.

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