Second half turnaround just short in 69-65 loss to Red Wolves

J. Jones and S. Jones guide team in second half

January 15, 2011 · MT Athletic Communications

JONESBORO, Ark. - A complete second half turnaround put the Blue Raiders within reach but foul trouble late in the game hampered the comeback attempt. Arkansas State downed the Blue Raiders, 69-65, on Saturday night in the Convocation Center. The Blue Raiders (7-11, 2-3) shot 51.6 percent from the field in the second half and held ASU to just five field goals during the turnaround. But the Red Wolves (9-10, 4-2) made 17 free throws which was 10 more than Middle Tennessee even attempted. "I thought our team responded really well at halftime. We limited Arkansas State to 29 percent and just five field goals in the second half. Again it was a tale of the free throw line. They shot 25 in the second half and we shot seven and they outscored us 17 to 4. Arkansas State made some of the tough plays at the end to win," head coach Kermit Davis said. Middle Tennessee trailed 41-28 at the half and shot 34.8 percent compared to ASU who shot 55.6 and had two players in double figures. Three Blue Raiders scored in double figures led by r-sophomore Jason Jones who ended the game with 18 which included eight free throws. Jones also had a team high seven rebounds and two steals. Freshman Shawn Jones had one of the best second half performances for the Blue Raiders as he went 5 for 7 from the field to finish the game with 12 points. "He was a lot more active and rebounded the ball better. Hopefully that will get him started. Two of the last three games he has

started to play better and that's a good sign. A lot of times freshmen start kicking in around January and February and hopefully he will continue to improve as we get closer to the conference tournament," Davis. Defensively, Middle Tennessee had 10 steals and 31 rebounds with sophomore JT Sulton and senior Rod Emanuel each pulling down six. ASU ended the game with a 45.5 percent shooting percentage with three players in double figure scoring led by Donald Boone with 16 as he ended the game 6 for 11 from the field. ASU took an early 9-4 lead but then free throws by Emanuel cut it back to three-points, 9-6, with 15:55 on the clock. Then five straight by Middle Tennessee gave it an 11-9 lead at the 14 minute mark. The Red Wolves caught fire going on a 9-7 run to extend their lead to five, 18-13, with 10:46 on the clock. Middle Tennessee trailed 41-28 at the half after allowing the Red Wolves to go on a 21-12 run in the last eight minutes of the half. The Blue Raiders committed 10 turnovers in the first half including three in the last six minutes. Washington led all scorers with eight points at the half after making 3 of 4 attempts from the field. Sulton led the defense with four rebounds at the break but also had the most turnovers on the team with three. ASU shot 55.6 percent from the field in the first half and had two players in double figures. Middle Tennessee shot 34.8 percent from the field and made 10 of 12 free throws. Shawn Jones guided Middle Tennessee to begin the second half scoring eight of its first 14 points and cutting the ASU lead to seven, 47-40. Then a basket by Jason Jones, who had the other six points to open the half, made it a five-point game, 47-42, with 13:37 on the clock. The Blue Raiders extended their run, 22-14, to keep ASU within five at the 11-minute mark as the Red Wolves called a time out. Middle Tennessee kept the score within four with right at five minutes to play after a 12-6 run in which the Red Wolves only points were off free throws, 62-58. Then two free throws by Jason Jones made it a two-point game, 62-60. A basket by Shawn Jones, good defense and a free throw by Jason Jones cut the ASU lead to one, 66-65, with 1:58 to play. Middle Tennessee will be back in action on Thursday, Jan. 20 when it plays host to Troy, and then the Blue Raiders will entertain Denver on the 22nd in the annual "Legends Reunion" game. Both games start at 7 pm. The game with the Trojans is set to air on ESPN3.com. Blue Raider fans are invited to attend Kermit Davis Live! each Monday night at Coach's Grill in Murfreesboro. Chip Walters, the voice of the Blue Raiders, hosts the show which airs from 7-8 p .m. on WGNS (100.5. FM, 101 .9 FM, 1450 AM), WMOT (89 .5) and WNSR (560 AM). Fans have the opportunity to ask questions by calling into the show at 1-866-RAIDERS, emailing radio@goblueraiders.com or submitting a question if they are in attendance.

Printed on May 20, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/50503