

Blue Raiders complete season sweep of Owls

MT closes first half of SBC slate unbeaten

January 26, 2011 · Athletic Communications

BOCA RATON, Fla. - Six players reached double-figure scoring, including a pair of double-doubles, to guide the Middle Tennessee women's basketball team to an 85-53 triumph Wednesday night at Florida Atlantic inside the FAU Arena in Boca Raton, Fla.

Freshman Ebony Rowe tallied her 11th double-double of the season, and fifth in conference action, with 19 points and 10 rebounds. She drained 8-of-9 field goals and 3-of-4 free throws to lead all players in scoring.

Sophomore Icelyn Elie added the second Blue Raider double-double, the second of her career, with 14 points and a game-best 11 boards, 10 of which came on the defensive glass.

Joining the pair in double-figure scoring for Middle Tennessee were junior Tina Stewart (15 points), sophomore Kortni Jones (12), senior Anne Marie Lanning (11) and freshman KeKe Stewart (10).

Teri Stamps was the lone Owl in double digits, recording all 12 of her points after halftime. April Goins topped FAU with six rebounds, as it lost the battle on the glass, 43-31.

Tina Stewart provided the early spark for the Blue Raiders, draining consecutive 3-pointers, to push their lead to 8-2 at the first media timeout. The MT run would reach a dozen just under a half-minute later, as Rowe powered in a layup on an in-bounds play at 14:57 to give the Blue Raiders a 14-2 edge.



Kalyn Dinkins answered with a triple for the Owls for their first points in over three minutes and Middle Tennessee (17-4, 8-0 Sun Belt) maintained its double-digit edge at the next media timeout with an 18-7 cushion. Florida Atlantic would then score the next two buckets but KeKe Stewart hit a jumper in the lane for a 20-11 advantage as the halfway mark of the opening period was crossed.

After Vontrice Dennis sliced the margin to seven once again, the Blue Raiders rattled off six straight, including four by Rowe, before Takia Brooks and Kimberly Smith hit back-to-back treys on consecutive trips down the floor for FAU, pulling it back within seven, 26-19.

Middle Tennessee then took advantage of a four-minute scoring drought by Florida Atlantic (4-15, 1-7 Sun Belt) by tallying the next eight points and 10 of the final 14 in the half to take a 36-21 lead into halftime.

The Blue Raiders opened the second stanza by scoring the first seven points, the initial five by Rowe, to claim a 43-21 edge and force an Owl timeout. Stamps then broke the lull with a short jumper for her team's first points of the session at 17:25. After Jones countered with a 3-pointer, Stamps added one of her own on the next FAU possession to make it a 20-point difference, 46-26.

Stamps' triple would be the last Owl points for nearly six minutes as another drought struck the home team. Thirteen Middle Tennessee points were scored over the stretch, including the lone trey by Lanning, as the Blue Raiders widened their advantage to 33, 59-26, with 11:36 left. Florida Atlantic broke out of its slump with an 8-0 spurt, using a pair of baskets from Stamps and Breanna Turner to close within 25, 59-34.

The next 10 points went in favor of MT, as the Blue Raiders located their post players for the eight of the 10 points during surge to push the lead to 35, 69-34, with 7:06 to play. The Owls cut the deficit back to 32 within the next minute, but a 7-0 Middle Tennessee run, capped by a Jones triple at 4:39, made the difference a game-high 39, 78-39.

As the Blue Raiders began to substitute their bench players into the contest, Florida Atlantic took control and would utilize a 10-0 streak to trim the margin back to 29, 78-49, at the 2:31 mark on a Turner layup.

Tina Stewart hit MT's final triple of the contest to halt the surge and start a 6-0 run, capped by a pair of free throws from sophomore Dymon Raynor, before the Owls scored twice more down the stretch to decide the final outcome.

Middle Tennessee will return to action at 3:30 p.m. Central Saturday when it remains in south Florida to face FIU in Miami. Dick Palmer will call all the action live on the Blue Raider Network, WGNS (100.5 FM, 101.9 FM, 1450 AM), WMOT (89.5 FM) and WBRY (96.7 FM, 1540 AM).

Fans are also reminded of Sun Belt Tournament tickets now on-sale through the Middle Tennessee ticket office. Ticket booklets are \$83 and can be purchased by stopping by the ticket office at Gate 1A of Floyd Stadium or calling 1-888-YES-MTSU for the league event, held March 5-8 in Hot Springs, Ark.

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/50755>