Notes and Quotes from Rice Game

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PIPPEN COMES UP BIG: Junior William Pippen led the Blue Raiders win over Rice on Tuesday night by stuffing the stat sheet with 20 points, seven rebounds, six steals and two assists. His seven rebounds equalled a personal best, while the six steals was a new career-high and tied the eighth most in school history. In his last two home games, Pippen is averaging 22.5 points and 6.5 rebounds. **DOUBLE-DOUBLE:** Middle Tennessee registered its first double-double of the season tonight when senior Iiro Tenngren registered 15 points and 11 boards. It marked Tenngren's first double-double of his career. Over his last two games, Tenngren is averaging 11.5 rebounds. **GOING TO THE GLASS:** The Blue Raiders ripped down a season-high 47 rebounds tonight in the win over Rice, including 20 offensive caroms. It marked the most total rebounds by the Blue Raiders since collecting 50 against St. Francis in the 2000-01 season opener - a span of 32 games and the most offensive boards since registering 21 against Murray State in 2000. Middle Tennessee has now won the board battle in all four of its home games (all wins). **THIS -N' THAT:** Middle Tennessee's 4-2 record to start the season is its best since jumping out to a 4-2 mark in 1997-98 - Randy Wiel is now a perfect 3-0 as a Blue Raider against teams from the state of Texas - Tonight's win was the 50th for Wiel at the Murphy Center - William Pippen equalled his personal best with three made three-pointers - Tommy Gunn's double figure scoring streak of six straight games came to an end tonight after the sophomore was held to just nine points - Point guard Eric Parham recorded a season best six rebounds - Tommy Gunn pulled down a season-high seven rebounds - D'Marius Wilkes left the game tonight after just three minutes of action with a wrist injury. Wilkes is doubtful for Thursday's game at UT Martin.

MT Head Coach Randy Wiel:

"This is the biggest team, as far as size, we will face. We knew we would have to rebound and play

physically to win this game. Tonight is more indicative of how we want to play this season. We were due for a good offensive game and had to play good post defense tonight to open up our offense."

"Eric (Parham) did a good job of stepping up when D' Wilkes got hurt early in the first half. He had specific instructions about how to handle the ball because he has been turnover prone, but did a good job tonight and only had one."

"We needed to get back into the win column. It was great to get a win off a quality team like Rice"

MT Forward Iiro Tenngren:
"It was important to get production and play strong inside. In the first half they played man-to-man and then they ran zone on us. We struggled a little with the zone they put on us, but we spread it out and found our rhythm."

MT Forward William Pippen:
"It was a real confidence booster for us to bounce back and get a win tonight. You have defend your home court. It was important to get this win tonight because you don't want to go on the road on Thursday facing UT-Martin after suffering a loss at home. We played a really good Rice team tonight."

"Defensive output was key to our game tonight. We showed total effort tonight on the court and it paid off with our offensive play."

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