

Lady Raiders Drop 68-64 Decision

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Keisha McClinic's baseline runner sent the game to overtime, but Middle Tennessee could not hold on in dropping a 68-64 decision to Tennessee Tech Sunday afternoon at the Murphy Center. The Lady Raiders trailed by two at the end of regulation until McClinic's runner with 0.8 seconds left sent the game into overtime. Middle Tennessee scored the overtime's first points on a Jamie Thomatis putback, but the visiting Golden Eaglettes responded with the next five points, all by senior Leah Bird on a three-pointer and two free throws. Paula Penttila's three-pointer knotted the contest at 59 with 2:12 remaining in the OT, but again Tennessee Tech scored five straight points. Jennifer Wilhelm knocked down a three and Bird added two more foul shots. MT's Patrice Holmes cut the deficit to two with a three-pointer, the 10th of the game for the Lady Raiders. But Wilhelm connected with another trifecta with 17 seconds to go that put the final nail in the coffin. The contest had 11 ties and 10 lead changes, and neither squad held more than a six-point advantage throughout the contest. The Lady Raiders



outrebounded Tennessee Tech, 46-40, in the game, but had 20 turnovers to the visitors 10. Jamie Thomatis had her second double-double of the campaign with 15 points and 10 rebounds, while McClinic added 12 in the loss for the Lady Raiders. Bird netted 17 for Tech to lead four double-digit scorers. Wilhelm had 14, followed by 13 from Janet Holt and Misty Garrett added 10. Bird and Holt both grabbed 10 rebounds. The Golden Eaglettes held a 26-25 halftime lead, as both squads shot less than 40 percent in the opening 20 minutes. Tennessee Tech hit 36 percent from the field in the half, with Garrett scoring eight points to lead the visitors. Middle Tennessee shot just 33 percent, with Thomatis netting 11 points on 5-of-11 shooting. The Lady Raiders hit the road for a Friday meeting with Lipscomb at 7 p.m. at the new Allen Arena in Nashville. Middle Tennessee returns home against Kansas State on Monday, December 17, at 7 p.m. **GAME NOTES**

ANOTHER CLOSE CALL: The Lady Raiders' record dropped to 4-3 on the season with another close setback. Middle Tennessee's three losses have been by a combined 11 points with two of the games decided in overtime.

JT MOVES PAST CAPLEY: With seven made field goals today against Tennessee Tech, Jamie Thomatis surpassed Stephanie Capley for sixth place on the all-time field goals made list. Thomatis was 7-for-16 from the floor today to move her career total to 580 made field goals.

DOUBLE-DOUBLE: Senior Jamie Thomatis recorded her 11th career double-double today with 15 points and 10 rebounds in the loss to Tennessee Tech. Thomatis, who has two double-doubles in her last three games, registered 31 points and 10 boards against Ole Miss.

AMERICAN ACE PLAYER OF THE GAME: The Lady Raider Network selected sophomore Keisha McClinic as the "American Ace" Player of the Game against Tennessee Tech. McClinic, who hit a 12-footer with one second left to send the game into overtime, finished with 12 points, seven rebounds and three assists.

HOLMES MATCHES PERSONAL BEST: Freshman Patrice Holmes matched her personal best with nine rebounds against Tennessee Tech. Holmes, who is now averaging 5.6 rebounds a game, also tallied nine boards in an overtime loss to nationally-ranked Georgia.

THIS -N' THAT: Jamie Thomatis made her 45th straight start today vs TTU - Joanne Aluka was back in the starting lineup today after missing Wednesday's game against UT-Martin - Aluka has now started 59 times in the last 63 games - Jamie Thomatis has now scored in double figures 20 straight games dating to last season - Joanne Aluka's three-pointer in the first half was the first made trifecta of her career - Middle Tennessee's 10 made three-pointers against TTU was the most by the Lady Raiders since nailing 10 against Houston on Dec. 30, 2000 - Jessica McClure's three-pointer in the first half was the first of the season for the senior and only the sixth of her career - The Lady Raiders' 46 rebounds were the most since pulling down 55 in the season opener against Tennessee State - The Lady Raiders had 14 second half turnovers.

GAME QUOTES

MT Head Coach Stephany Smith

"Tennessee Tech really took us out of our game with their sagging defense. The team just got frustrated and turned the ball over because they wanted the quick looks. Jamie (Thomatis) couldn't get the looks she wanted and tried to force the ball."

"Overall, the team just didn't show the consistency we needed to win the game. I was disappointed with the little things. We just didn't attack the basket. We lost the game because we didn't box out and weren't aggressive down the stretch. The team as a whole just didn't dig deep and show the motivation to win the game."

MT Forward Jamie Thomatis

"We just didn't execute when it came down to the little things. Tennessee Tech played scrappy and we weren't playing strong with the ball. They took away the inside from us with their sagging

defense. Also their perimeter shooting was really good. It becomes a bad situation when you have to get into a three-point shoot-out with them."

MT Guard Keisha McClinic

"This is a big rivalry for us and I hate we didn't get the win. Not boxing out at the end of the game and giving up the rebound after the missed free throw, at the end of regulation, was big for Tennessee Tech. In the second half Tennessee Tech kept hitting the three-point shots and in the end that gave the game away."

Tennessee Tech Head Coach Bill Worrell

"I think we did a good job of rotating the ball. As a team we didn't shoot very well, and I think that is a credit to Middle Tennessee. Our foul shooting late in the game was crucial to us getting the opportunity for the win."

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