

Career Knight leads Blue Raiders to victory over Savannah State

Marcos Knight scores career-best 21 points

November 13, 2012 · @MTAthletics

[Box Score \(PDF\)](#)

SAVANNAH, Ga. - Senior guard Marcos Knight's career-high 21 points helped the Middle Tennessee men's basketball overcome a 12-point first-half deficit en route to a 58-55 victory over the Savannah State Tigers on Tuesday night at Tiger Arena.

With MT (2-0) trailing 29-23 at halftime, Knight took control of the contest, scoring 19 points in the latter frame. Playing in his home state for the first time as a Blue Raider, the Rentz, Ga., native went 10-for-10 from the free throw line and grabbed a game-high seven rebounds to go along with two steals.



Senior guard Bruce Massey matched Knight with seven boards and added seven points, three assists and two blocks. Junior guard Kerry Hammonds tallied a game-high four assists and grabbed five boards, while junior guard Tweety Knight, also a Rentz, Ga., native, chipped in three steals and three points.

After struggling from the field in the first half, shooting 34.8 percent, the Blue Raiders responded with a 53.3 percent performance in the second to finish the game shooting 42.1 percent from the field. The Tigers (1-1) had the reverse fortune, shooting 45.8 percent in the first compared to 34.5 percent in the second to finish at 39.6 percent.

The telling stat, however, was MT's 25-for-38 performance at the line. SSU was just 11-for-23. It was those free throws that proved critical down the stretch, as senior forward JT Sulton sank a pair to break up a 52-52 tie with 3:20 remaining, then Massey hit two with nine seconds remaining to give MT the final three-point cushion.

The first half, though, belonged to the Tigers. SSU jumped out to a 16-4 lead before the Blue

Raiders went on an 11-0 run, sparked by a Massey free throw. MT managed to tie the contest at 20 on a Massey layup with 4:03 to play in the early frame, but SSU answered with a 7-0 run before taking a six-point advantage into the break.

M. Knight gave the Blue Raiders their first lead of the contest four minutes into the second half, knocking down MT's only 3-pointer of the game. He also scored nine of the first 11 points for the Blue Raiders to open the second stanza.

The seesaw affair continued, as MT muscled its way to a seven-point lead after another M. Knight jumper with 10:53 to play, but the Tigers worked it back to a tie game with 3:20 remaining when Sulton gave the Blue Raiders the lead for good with two free throws.

Rashad Hassan led the Tigers with 16 points, while Deven Williams added 10.

MT continues the road swing this weekend, traveling to Tampa, Fla., for a matchup against No. 10 Florida on Sunday. Tipoff is slated for 3 p.m. CT from the Tampa Bay Times Forum.

HEAD COACH KERMIT DAVIS

On Savannah State...

"They've got a lot of size, good guards and they're disciplined. I'm impressed with their team and a fan of their coach and how he gets those guys to play."

On Marcos Knight...

"He was really good. One of the reasons we played this game was to bring some of these Georgia guys back (home). I challenged Marcos as hard as I've ever challenged him at halftime. He didn't rebound the ball in the first half and kind of stood around. Like all really, really good players do, he accepted the challenge and put the team on his back. He made some great shots and some toughness plays. It was a great homecoming for him."

SENIOR GUARD MARCOS KNIGHT

On making his return to Georgia...

"It feels good to be back at home. We started off kind of slow and Coach Davis got onto us at halftime. We just got out-toughed in the first half, but we were a tougher team in the second half and rebounded the ball better."

On play down the stretch...

"Every possession counts. Coach Davis talks to us about that. You can't turn the ball over, you've got to box out, rebound make good shots, move the ball from side to side. He's a great coach and we listen to him and came out with the victory tonight."

On Bruce Massey's crucial free throws with nine seconds left...

"We work on free throws a lot. We have a lot of trust in Bruce as a senior guard. One thing I told him was 'Let last year against Arkansas State go. Knock these two down for us because we need them.'"

On motivation...

"At halftime Coach Davis told me I wasn't playing like the player he recruited. I don't want to let my teammates and coaches down, so I told him at halftime, 'Trust me, I've got you coach.' I had a lot of family here and I didn't want to let them down. But most importantly we got the W tonight."

Printed on July 25, 2014

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/64008>