

Houston Defeats Lady Raiders, 75-63

December 20, 2001 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Houston's Chandi Jones scored a game-high 22 points and the visiting Lady Cougars answered every challenge from the home team in taking a 75-63 victory over Middle Tennessee Thursday night at the Murphy Center. Jones netted 14 points before halftime, as the Lady Cougars jumped out to a 40-31 advantage at the half after shooting 55 percent from the field in the opening 20 minutes. A 9-2 run in the middle of the period gave Houston a 26-16 lead with 6:25 remaining, and the Lady Raiders were never able to get closer than seven for the rest of the half. Neither team shot the ball well in the second half, as the two squads combined for just 18 points in the first 10 minutes of the half. The Lady Cougars upped the lead to as many as 13 points at 50-37 and had a 10-point advantage with 3:47 remaining. The Lady Raiders cut it to seven after a Patrice Holmes three-pointer



with 3:12 left, but that was as close as Middle Tennessee would get late in the contest. Holmes and Jamie Thomatis each had 14 points to lead the Lady Raiders, and Keisha McClinic added 11. McClinic made three of the team's five three-pointers in the contest. Thomatis and Jennifer Justice each grabbed a team-high seven rebounds in the loss. Jones had a game-high 22 for the Lady Cougars, while Shondra Bush scored 13 and Courtney Pastner had a dozen for Houston. Nicole Oliver added nine points and a game-high 10 rebounds. The Lady Raiders travel to Cincinnati to take on Xavier Sunday at 1 p.m. CT at the Cintas Center before breaking for Christmas. Middle Tennessee returns home December 29 to open conference play against New Orleans at 1 p.m. at the Murphy Center. **GAME NOTES**

MCCLURE PASSES MORRISON: With three assists tonight against Houston, senior Jessica McClure surpassed Julie Morrison for fifth place on the all-time assists list. McClure now has 372 career assists and needs 27 more to tie Kim Webb for fourth place.

THOMATIS TIES CAPLEY: Senior Jamie Thomatis recorded her 80th career double figure scoring game when she netted 14 against Houston. That figure ties Stephanie Capley for fifth place on the all-time double figure scoring list.

MCCLINIC SETS CAREER-HIGH: Sophomore Keisha McClinic, who has now scored in double figures five straight games, set her career best in steals against Houston with seven. That total equaled the seventh most ever recorded in a game by a Middle Tennessee player.

NEXT UP: The Lady Raiders will head to the Queen city of Cincinnati to take on the Xavier Musketeers on Sunday afternoon. Xavier, who advanced to the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament last year, defeated the Lady Raiders last year at the Gaylord Entertainment Center 92-89. The Lady Musketeers are 4-6 on the season and will have had eight days off between their last game on Dec. 15 and Sunday's contest against MT. Tipoff is scheduled for 1 PM CST.

THIS -N' THAT: Jennifer Justice blocked a career-high four shots against Houston - Jamie Thomatis made her 48th straight start tonight vs Houston - Jamie Thomatis has now scored in double figures 23 straight games - Jamie Thomatis has now led the Lady Raiders in scoring 65 times over her career - Patrice Holmes had her second best scoring game of the year with 14 points against Houston - The Lady Raiders were outrebounded tonight against Houston for the first time since the Cincinnati game on Nov. 24 - Keisha McClinic connected on a season-high three three-pointers in the loss to the Lady Cougars - The Lady Raiders have had 20 or more turnovers in four of their last five games - Middle Tennessee's five losses this year have come against teams with a combined record of 42-6.

GAME QUOTES

MT Head Coach Stephany Smith: "Houston knocked down the shots they needed to tonight, because that is what good teams do. I thought the game was lost in the first half, anything we did in the second half was the team trying to come back."

"We didn't do a good job executing and sprinting back in transition. Their perimeter players outran our post players in the backcourt."

"Houston's Chandi Jones is a phenomenal player. We were well aware of that and that is why we were playing support defense on her."

MT Guard Patrice Holmes: "We missed a lot of easy shots, and just had a poor night shooting overall. Houston is the most athletic team we have faced all year. Everyone on the team can handle the ball. We had a tough time guarding Jones."

Houston Head Coach Joe Curl: "This is our biggest win this season. Middle Tennessee is a team that took Georgia into overtime and lost by one to Kansas State. They disguise their plays really well, and that is how they made that run in the second half to get back into the game. Jones was the difference in the game for us tonight. Whenever we panic we put the ball in her hands to calm us down."

"Middle Tennessee is well coached by Stephany Smith. She has a good basketball team and I see great things for them later in the season."