Hammonds leads Blue Raiders to win over Louisiana

Murfreesboro native hits career-best 10 field goals, six treys

January 19, 2013 · @MTAthletics

Box Score (PDF)

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee used a career-best shooting performance from Kerry Hammonds to defeat Louisiana, 82-60, at the Murphy Center on Saturday evening.

The Blue Raiders (16-4, 8-1 SBC) have now won five straight and nine of the last 10. In addition, they have won nine straight against Louisiana (7-14, 3-7 SBC).

Hammonds was 10-for-11 from the field, a career-high in field goals, and hit a career-best six treys en route to 27 points in 27 minutes of action. His 90.9 field goal percentage in the contest is tied for the sixth-best in school history.

Raymond Cintron was the other Blue Raider to reach double-digits, hitting four 3- pointers for 12 points.

In the first half, Hammonds hit three 3-pointers in just over two minutes, but MT struggled to pull away until 10:57 remaining in the frame when a layup by Neiko Hunter started a 19-2 Blue Raider run that featured a streak of 12 unanswered points.

At the break, MT led 41-21 behind Hammonds' 17 first-half points.

MT put the game away in the second half, using an impressive 17-2 run at the 12:32 mark that lasted over five minutes. During the stretch, Hammonds and Cintron went on a shooting tear, each hitting two 3-pointers for a quick 12 unanswered points.

MT is back in action next Thursday at North Texas and will return to the Murphy Center on Saturday, Jan. 26, as the Blue Raiders take on WKU at 3 p.m. on ESPN2.

FIRST HALF

- Middle Tennessee held Louisiana scoreless for 3:06 while scoring seven unanswered.
- Blue Raiders went on a 19-2 over 8:46 that included 12 unanswered points over 5:40.
- Kerry Hammonds hit three 3-pointers in span of 2:08 and was 4-for-5 from 3-point range.
- Nine of 24 first-half rebounds were offensive.
- MT outscored Louisiana 20-4 in the paint.
- Had just two turnovers, a season low for a half.
- 13 assists on 16 field goals

SECOND HALF

- JT Sulton scored six of MT's first eight points in the second half.
- Middle Tennessee had a 17-2 run over 5:08, including a streak of 12 unanswered points (six points each for Hammonds and Cintron).
- Blue Raiders hit 12 straight shots for 22 points in the second half, including five straight 3-pointers by Hammonds (2) and Cintron (3).
- Finoy Perkins scored the first points of his career by hitting two free throws with 39 seconds to go.

POSTGAME NOTES

- MT is 16-4 overall and 8-1 in the Sun Belt, remaining atop the East Division.
- MT is 11-0 at home, including one win at Bridgestone Arena
- MT is 25-2 over the last two years in Murphy Center and has won 23 straight regular-season games in Murphy Center
- The starting lineup of Hunter, Massey, M. Knight, Hammonds, Sulton is now 2-0
- MT has held nine of its last 10 opponents to 60 points or less
- MT is 13-0 when leading at halftime
- MT's bench out-scored UL, 30-15, and has out-scored its opponent in all but one game this season
- Kerry Hammonds crack double figures for the second time this season with 27 points, one shy of his career-high. He hit a career-high 10 field goals, including a career-best six 3-pointers.
- Hammonds' 10-for-11 performance from the field is tied for sixth in MT single-game history. The record is 11-for-11 held by Quincy Vance against Austin Peay on Feb. 25, 1991.
- Hammonds' 27 points are the most by a Blue Raider since he had 28 against South Alabama on Feb. 5, 2011
- Raymond Cintron cracked double figures for the ninth time this season with 12 points

HEAD COACH KERMIT DAVIS

"We're still a team that can make great improvement. That's why I'm going to coach them hard the last eight or ten minutes of the game no matter what the score is and no matter who's in, because all of those guys have played quality minutes for our team. I just can't imagine not taking advantage of every minute you get to play in an organized game with a great crowd there. We're going to keep trying to reach perfection. We'll never get there, but we'll sure try to get there every day.

"These guys know how much I love them and how much time we spend with them individually. Away from the floor, we have a great time. We laugh, cut up, have a great time, but on the floor we coach

them. We're going to try to get better, and I think that's why they accept coaching so well. They know the relationship our staff has with those players."

On the 17-2 run in the second half when UL closed the halftime gap...
"We have done that the last three out of four games, but with our bench play, we can find some other guys to make shots. I was ecstatic about our win, but was disappointed with the way we played early in the second half."

"I thought our team defended good for a time. We got in a lull in the second half, but we can go to the bench and get guys like Raymond Cintron to come in and give us a lift. It was good weekend for the Blue Raiders, for sure."

On Kerry Hammonds...
"Kerry has spent so much extra time shooting. Every time I'm leaving this gym, he's in here late, he's at practice early. He's doing a lot of extra time and it was great to just get him going like that. What a terrific day for him."

JUNIOR GUARD KERRY HAMMONDS
On his shooting performance...
"It was just one of those nights. The basket looked as big as the ocean, and everything was going in."

On putting together complete games...
"We played our two best games of the year on Thursday night (vs. UALR) and tonight. We knew that we needed these two games to start pulling away in the conference, so we wanted to come out and get these wins. We kind of came out second half sluggish and picked it back up, and we knew these two games were big so we could start to pull away in the conference."

SENIOR GUARD RAYMOND CINTRON
On improving each game...
"We are just trying to come out and get better each game. Starting slow in the second half was the only problem we had today. They had a quick run, like 8-2, so we are just trying to get better every day and pound teams and leave no hope."

On 3-point defense...
"Defending the "3" is all about communicating. We have a great defensive team. We just go out there and do what we have to do. As long as we communicate, everything will be fine."

On Kerry Hammonds...
"I see him having a good night, so I started shooting a little bit, he started making 3's and I didn't want him to make me look bad."

Printed on April 16, 2014
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/65088