Adjustments payoff for Raiders in win at North Texas

MT limits Mean Green to 17 points in second half

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- **Box Score (PDF)**

DENTON, Texas - Middle Tennessee women's basketball used defensive adjustments and a strong second half to collect its eighth consecutive win with a 60-47 victory against North Texas on Thursday evening.

MT (14-5, 9-1 Sun Belt) trailed by as many as 13 in the first half, but narrowed the gap to three at the break. In the first half, North Texas (7-12, 6-4 SBC) connected on six triples to open to a 15-2 lead. However, the Blue Raiders adjusted their defensive strategy and limited NT to just one second-half triple, while outscoring the Mean Green 33-to-17 in the final half.

North Texas was held scoreless for six-plus minutes as the Raiders broke out to a 13-2 run in the second half. The win gave Middle Tennessee its' 12th consecutive road victory in conference play, as the Raiders remained atop the Sun Belt East.

Senior guard Kortni Jones tied a career-high with six three-pointers, setting a school and Sun Belt record with 21 three-point attempts. The Oak Ridge product finished with a game-high 23 points, while dishing out three assists and collecting five rebounds.

Ebony Rowe continued her strong play, reaching her 44th double-double with 21 points and 14 rebounds. Rowe was 9-of-13 from the field as she tallied double-figures for the 27th consecutive game.

Also reaching double-digits was senior Icelyn Elie with 10 points. The Lebanon native narrowly missed a double-double, grabbing nine rebounds and tying a career-best three blocks.

The Raiders shot 35 percent for the game, knocking down 24-of-68 from the field. North Texas was held to a 29 percent clip (15-of-51) for the game, including 19 percent (5-of-27) in the second half.

MT out-manned the Mean Green, 48-to-38, on the boards. MT dished out 11 assists in the game, with four coming from the hands of Laken Leonard. The junior finished with eight rebounds and five points.

North Texas' Loryn Goodwin led the Mean Green with 5-of-10 makes from the field for 21 points.

The three-points started flowing for NT early as all of their points came from three point plays to take a 15-2 lead over the Raiders. MT used a much needed 13-2 run to cut their deficit to 18-14.

MT used three consecutive baskets from Rowe to put the Raiders within three points, 30-27, at the half.

In the first half, the Mean Green shot 41 percent (10-of-24), while holding MT to a 30 percent clip (11-of-36). North Texas was 6-of-10 from three-point land with Loryn Goodwin leading the way with 18 points. Rowe had 14 points and Elie managed six points in the opening half.

North Texas went cold to open up the second half and was held scoreless for a six minute stretch in the second half. The Raiders hit four of their six treys in the second half as MT won its 10th straight over the Mean Green.

Middle Tennessee returns home to take on arch rival Western Kentucky on Sunday, Jan. 27. The matchup is slated for 2 p.m. at the Murphy Center and is part of True Blue Week. Fans are encouraged to pack the Murphy Center with blue attire as the Raiders look for their ninth consecutive win. Sunday's game will also air on ESPN3.

NOTES

MT won its 12th consecutive conference road game dating back to last season ... The Blue Raiders win streak of eight is 14th nationally ... MT has a 15-4 record all-time against North Texas, including 10-1 under head coach Rick Insell ... Ebony Rowe inked her 44th career double-double and reached double-figures for the 27th straight time ... Rowe moves to 11th all-time in scoring at MT with 1,481 ... Kortni Jones tied a career-best with six made treys ... She set a Sun Belt and MT record with 21 three-point attempts in a game, surpassing 20 set by Arkansas State's Sonja Tate on Feb. 22, 1993 against Western Kentucky ... Icelyn Elie matched her career-high with three blocks ... Former MT women's basketball player Bama Burrell (1998-99) was in attendance, as well as former MT football player and current Dallas Cowboy Phillip Tanner.

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