

Lady Raiders Fall to Western Kentucky 71-66

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

The Middle Tennessee Lady Raider basketball team (9-8, 2-3 Sun Belt) fell 71-66 to Sun Belt Conference East foe Western Kentucky (10-6, 4-1 SBC) Thursday at Murphy Center. Middle Tennessee led or was tied with the Lady Toppers for most of the second half but a huge three point bucket by sophomore forward Leslie Logsdon, to put WKU up 57-55 with 5:03 left to play, took the wind out of the



Lady Raider's sails. After Logsdon's trey, Middle Tennessee went on a three minute drought without a bucket until Jennifer Justice hit two free throws to make the score 61-57 with 2:18 left to play. Middle Tennessee could get no closer than four points for the remainder of the game. Senior forward Jamie Thomatis led Middle Tennessee with 20 points, had seven rebounds and was 4-4 from the free throw line. Sophomore Jennifer Justice and freshman Patrice Holmes was the only other Lady Raiders in double figures with 10 points apiece. Middle Tennessee ends their two game home stand on Saturday with a 7 p.m. tip-off with North Texas. North Texas leads the series 2-0 and the two teams have never met in Murfreesboro. **PENTILLA SETS SEASON MARK:** Junior guard Paula Pentilla collected a season-high five rebounds against Western Kentucky Thursday night. Pentilla's effort tonight was only one shy of her personal best of six boards. **NO. 87:** Jamie Thomatis recorded her 87th career double figure scoring game to rank 5th all-time at MT. Thomatis, who played her 100th game tonight, has only failed to reach double digits 13 times in her career. **MCCLURE TIES CHASTAIN:** With one steal tonight against WKU, Jessica McClure tied former Lady Raider Kelly Chastain for fifth place on the all-time list. McClure now has 199 career steals and needs seven more to surpass Jennifer McFall for fourth. **CAREER-HIGH FOR HALL:** Freshman Renee Hall came off the bench tonight and pulled down a career-high nine rebounds. Hall, who equaled WKU's Kristina Covington for game-high honors, had a previous best of five boards earlier this year against Austin Peay. **THIS -N' THAT:** Jamie Thomatis collected her 600th career rebound tonight when she pulled down her second carom of the game against Western Kentucky in the first half - Thomatis finished with seven rebounds against WKU and now has 605 for her career - Jessica McClure fouled out for the first time this season and became just the second Lady Raider to do so this year - Jennifer Justice has now scored in double figures in back-to-back games for the first time this year - Middle Tennessee's 44 rebounds was its most since collecting 46 earlier this year against Tennessee Tech - In back-to-back nights against Western Kentucky's men and WKU's women, the Blue Raider teams were just a combined 5-for-34 from behind the arc. **Quotes from MT vs. WKU**
Jaime Thomatis: "We started out with a lot of turnovers, and I think that was the story of the whole

ballgame. Our shots were off, and I do not know what the contributing factor was to that. The good thing is we are only five games into the conference so we have some ground to make up." "They are a very aggressive and very scrappy team, but I think that is the story of all the teams we have played thus far." "We have struggled at home this year, but we have some more home games and hopefully we can redeem ourselves. We will come back tomorrow and look at the game plan for Saturday and let this game be behind us." **Coach Smith:** "Even when Western wasn't prepared to make a play we were mighty nice to them. We gave them several opportunities to come up with whatever play they needed." "I told the team in the locker room that nobody is more hurt and upset that we lost the basketball game than me. We played with more energy, heart and intensity than we have played with in the past six weeks. We had a lot of transition opportunities, which led to those turnovers. I pointed out that we don't play at this pace in practice, so how in the world are we supposed to complete a transition in a game if we haven't practiced it time and time again. I was pleased with our heart and our effort, and that has been something that has been lacking on this team for the past two months. When you see that, all the rest can be fixed." "They (WKU) frustrated us defensively. They do a really good job defensively, but I still think we did a very poor job of taking care of the basketball. I thought we were too lackadaisical with it. We acted like we were the only five people on the court and nobody else was around. But they were pretty aggressive, and they put pressure in the backcourt on us for 40 minutes of the ballgame. It worked to their advantage obviously." **WKU Coach Campbell:** "Stephany (Smith) is a very good coach. They (MT) are a very good basketball team. There is no doubt about it, it was an equally matched game." "Logsdon, I don't know where she got it from, but the courage and the guts to shoot those threes at the end when Natalie (Powers) was drawing the traffic was pretty remarkable." "I really thought that it was a very good basketball game. Middle Tennessee is a well-coached team. They execute very well. They don't do a lot of things, but what they do, they do superbly. We knew it was going to be a battle. We had to play this game for 40 minutes and that is what a great game is. I tried to tell Stephany before the game that this was the best game in the country right now. It just happens to be in the Sun Belt Conference, and hopefully it gets the attention that it deserves."

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