

Motlow Bucks win first conference game

By DUANE GRADDY JR.
Sports Editor

Behind the red-hot shooting of guard Gerrod Shirey, Motlow State took a 21-point lead over visiting Roane State Wednesday before going ice cold and having to stave off a ferocious comeback.

At the final buzzer, the Bucks and the Copperweld faithful could heave a sigh of relief as Motlow took the 82-77 victory.

"I hate to get up 20-something with 10 minutes left," Motlow coach Lonnie Thompson said. "It's just human nature to back off."

Going into Saturday's play at Chattanooga State, Motlow is 10-8 overall and 1-0 in TJCCA play after Wednesday's win.

Shirey, who led all-hardy to the Class A state championship last year, was simply on fire Tuesday, hitting 12-of-16 shots from the field, including two treys, and finishing with 30 points to lead all scorers.

After Roane took an 8-4 lead early, Shirey gave his team a

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— Photo by Duane Graddy Jr.

And They're off!

Motlow State's Dominic Tharpe starts off his side's scoring with this slam dunk en route to an 82-77 win. Tharpe finished with 11 points.

Bucks

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boost with 7 of his total over the next few minutes, which was catalyst for an 11-0 Motlow run, which allowed the Bucks to go to the locker room up 47-31.

Not letting up to start the second half, the Bucks extended the lead to 73-51 with eight minutes to play.

Then, with Shirey on the bench, the Raiders made a run, reeling off 16 unanswered points and holding Motlow scoreless for over five minutes.

Fortunately, down the stretch, the Bucks hit four free throws in the final minute, which was just enough as two Raiders hit two treys in the final 20 seconds to cut the Motlow lead to three.

The Bucks stand at 2-2 in 1999 play, not bad, Thompson said, considering three players left the team during the holiday break.

"The first two losses after the new year, we hadn't made adjustments (to losing the players)," Thompson said. "We're the type of team that has to stick with fundamentals."

MEN'S GAME

Motlow State 82, Roane St. 77
Motlow St. (82) — Errick McFarland 2-0-4 8, Gerrod Shirey 10-3-1 30, Matt Holman 2-0-3 7, Malik Hazley 3-0-2 8, John Carter 2-1-0 7, Jerry Robinson 2-0-3 7, Quincy Crutchfield 2-0-0 4, Dominic Tharpe 3-2-3 11.

Roane St. (77) — David Vespie 1-2-0 8, Jason Taylor 2-7-0 25, Jason Stokely 1-0-0 2, Jeremy Maupin 3-0-0 6, Rinsley 3-1-0 9, Towan Siler 5-2-2 18, Ken Mobley 4-0-0 8.

Halftime — 47-31 Motlow St.
Records — Motlow St. 10-8 (1-0 TJCCA), Roane St. (0-1).