

# MT vs. SEMO Postgame Notes and Quotes

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## **First Drive Firsts:** Middle

Tennessee picked up several firsts on its first drive against Southeast Missouri. The 10-play, 68-yard TD drive marks the first Blue Raider points in the first quarter this season. It also marks the first Blue Raider lead of the season. The drive culminated with a one-yard TD plunge from Blue Raider QB Andrico Hines, giving him his first career rushing score. **Lee Hits**

## **Century Mark:** Sophomore

RB ReShard Lee became the first Middle Tennessee back to rush for over 100 yards this season with his 113-yard effort tonight. The Brunswick, GA native has now reached the

100-yard plateau on three occasions. Lee's last 100-yard game came on Nov. 3, 2001 when he tallied a career-best 146 yards against Arkansas State. **More on Lee:** RB ReShard Lee hauled in a career-best four catches against Southeast Missouri in tonight's contest. Lee tallied 13 yards receiving on the night. Lee's four catches bests his previous high of two, which he had done on four occasions. However, Lee did not eclipse his previous receiving yardage high of 37 yards, which he accumulated against Tennessee earlier in the year. **Quite a Crowd:** 27,519 fans packed into Floyd Stadium for tonight's home opener, marking the second-largest crowd in Middle Tennessee history. Tonight's attendance stands second only to the opening game in the newly-renovated stadium in 1998, when 27,568 were on hand to witness Middle Tennessee defeating Tennessee State. **Home Winning Streak Ends:** The Blue Raiders saw their 11-game home winning streak come to an end with tonight's loss to Southeast Missouri. The last time the Blue Raiders lost a home game was Nov. 13, 1999 against Central Florida. The loss is also the first home-opening loss for the Blue Raiders under Andy McCollum. **Worst Start Since '86:** Tonight's loss give the Blue Raiders an 0-4 start on the year, marking the worst start of a season since the Blue Raiders began the year 1-4 in 1986. However, in that season, the team didn't start 0-4. In order to find a worse beginning to the season, you have to look back to 1980 when the Blue Raiders began the season 0-8. **Quick Hitters:** WR David Youell extended his streak of consecutive games with a catch to 26 with a first quarter reception ... Youell's streak also ranks as the third longest in school history ... DB Tony Sutton picked off the first pass of his career in the first quarter of today's game ... Junior DB Kabote Sikyala saw the first action of his career today as the backup at right corner ... WR Chris Henry made his first

career start in today's game ... FS Will Martin collected his first career interception in the second quarter of today's game ... OL Brandon Westbrook had his streak of consecutive starts broken at 14 tonight ... The Blue Raiders' offensive output of 284 yards is the second-lowest total of the year.

**QUOTES MT Head Coach Andy McCollum**

"[The game] wasn't very good. That starts with me. We didn't get it done. We'll go back and look at the film, look at myself and the staff and the kids. We got beat by a team that played better than us today. We didn't execute at times. It's my job to get it straightened out, and we will. Nobody needs to hang their head. We have some hurt kids. But we're not going to have this at Middle Tennessee. We will come back tomorrow with every kid that believes and that's going to work and that's going to get better. "Motivation is really not the thing. We're going to take the film and make sure we're giving our kids a chance to be successful. Then we're going to take the film and find out who wants to be successful. Then we're going to play the ones who are going to be tough and are going to find a way to win, because this will never happen again. **On the events of this week affecting preparation**

"That's not an excuse for us. That didn't keep me from doing my job. That's no reason for us losing this game. "Coming home was important to us and we had a great crowd, and I apologize because that's what we've been dreaming of. That's what hurts more than anything to have the excitement we have here and all the fans who came out for this team. "We had great opportunities and some kids who gave us a chance to do some things, but we didn't execute. In the first half every time you turned around it was either a holding call or some kind of penalty, making it 3rd and 20 or 2nd and 20. We've got to get that corrected. We're not in sync offensively. "Defensively we're going to look at where we are scheme-wise and where we hurt ourselves. They shouldn't run the ball like that on us. They shouldn't break a 70-yard run at the end of the game. That's ridiculous. I thought early on the defense did some things, got some turnovers and gave us a chance. We had chances to put them away offensively and it goes back to those mistakes. **MT LB Randy Arnold**

"We knew what they were coming out to do and we just didn't step up to the challenge. They spread us out and ran the ball and threw the ball. [WR Willie Ponder] was pretty good. "I talked to the team before the game and talked about how we've played bad in the first quarter. I told them we need to come out of the gate and we stepped up to the challenge at the beginning, but we've just got to stay at that level. We can't go back down. **MT QB Andrico Hines**

"We simply did not come out focused and ready to play. We did not take them seriously, and we paid for it. You have to play your top game all the time, no matter who you are playing, and tonight we didn't come with our best effort. The biggest disappointment is that we let all these fans down. This type crowd is something we have dreamed about and we let them down. That is very disappointing."

**SEMO Head Coach Tim Billings**

"I believe we caught Middle Tennessee a little flat. They were a little beaten up facing us and we got momentum early in the game and hung in there and got the win. I truly believe we turned a corner tonight." **SEMO QB Jack Tomco**

"I think Middle Tennessee came in and overlooked us. We earned their respect tonight. This win really puts us over the hump as we go to 3-2. I am really flying high." **SEMO RB Keiki Misipeka**

"The run that put us in the lead in the fourth quarter was a play we have been running all night. I just got a good seam and was able to take it in. We have got to stay focused and use this a momentum for when we enter conference play."