

MT stops Utah State, 45-28

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HICKS GETS 1,000: For the third consecutive season, running back Dwone Hicks topped the 1,000-yard mark when he rambled for 169 yards in the season finale against Utah State. Hicks is just the second player in school history to record three straight 1,000-yard seasons (Mike Moore 1975-77). Hicks accomplished the feat this year despite missing 2½ games due to a knee injury and only having 270 total rushing yards following the team's seventh game of the year.

SEASON FINALES: The Blue Raiders moved their record to 44-35-6 in regular season home finale's following today's win over Utah State. Middle Tennessee has now won 18 of its last 23 home finales and are a perfect 4-0 under Andy McCollum.



HICKS IN ENDZONE ... AGAIN: For the 10th time this year and the 58th time in his career, Dwone Hicks reached the endzone when he scored from four yards out on the Blue Raiders' opening drive. Hicks, the school's all-time leading touchdown producer, has scored at least one rushing touchdown in 19 of his last 25 games. Overall, Hicks now has 53 career rushing touchdowns and six receiving scores.

CALLOWAY GOES LONG: Junior Don Calloway recorded his second rushing touchdown of the season today when he sprinted in from 63 yards out in the first quarter. The 63-yard run was the longest of Calloway's career and the longest run from scrimmage by a Blue Raider since Dwone Hicks scored from 79 yards out against Louisiana Tech in 2000.

RASHADA GETS PICK: Junior Muhammad Rashada collected his career season-best third interception on the first play of the game today. Rashada now has four interceptions during his career.

SEVEN IN A ROW: PK Brian Kelly connected on his seventh straight made field goal today when he nailed a 20 yarder late in the second quarter. The made three-pointer was Kelly's 27th of his career on 34 attempts. Kelly's streak came to an end a few minutes later when he failed on a 32 yarder.

HENRY GETS FIRST TD RECEPTION: Redshirt freshman Chris Henry reeled in his first career touchdown pass when he brought down a 44-yard strike from Andrico Hines in the third quarter. The 44-yard pass matched the longest of Henry's career.

MORE ON HENRY: WR Chris Henry set personal bests in receptions and receiving yards today against Utah State. Henry recorded three catches for 57 yards and a touchdown. Henry finished the year with 14 catches to rank fourth on the team.

KELLY PASSES YOUNG: With nine points today against the Aggies, Brian Kelly surpassed Bobby Young for seventh place on the all-time scoring list at Middle Tennessee. Kelly now has 197 career points.

BURKE ON SCOREBOARD: True freshman Dennis Burke registered his first collegiate touchdown when he picked up a fumble in the fourth quarter and rambled 61 yards for the score. It was the first non special teams or offensive touchdown scored by the Blue Raiders this season.

QUICK HITTERS: Freshman Jeff Littlejohn made his first collegiate start today at defensive tackle ... The Blue Raiders scored on their opening drive of the game today for the third time this season (SEMO, UL-Monroe and Utah State) ... Senior Chris Gatlin made his first start of the season today at linebacker ... LB Sheldon Durham recorded his first sack of the season today early in the third quarter when he dropped Jose Fuentes for a six-yard loss ... FB Nick McAfee made his first collegiate reception today when he hauled in a four-yard pass from Andrico Hines in the third quarter ... FB John Madrick made his first collegiate reception today ... The Blue Raiders are now 18-1 when leading at the half ... Don Calloway rushed for a season-high 86 yards on just nine carries ... Punter Robert Billings averaged a season-low 34.5 yards a punt.

Middle Tennessee Head Coach Andy McCollum

"I am very proud of these kids and this game. Just like I told the seniors, we may not be champions but we've got a bunch of winners. And I really believe that. You go back and look at the tough season we've been through, one play here and one play there and this whole thing could have been different. We've got some seniors walking out of here that might not have reached our goals and nobody's happy about that, and I don't expect anybody to be happy about that. But we're going to fight like everything and we'll start Monday and we're going to get this thing to where we're playing for championships.

"They're a great offense, ranked like No. 12 in America. [Kevin Curtis] is one of the best receivers I've seen play. They're big. We knew going into it that they were going to score some points. But our defense made some plays and the punt we got gave us good field position. Dennis Burke's big play wrapped it up. We've got good young 'uns like that. We've got to pull this thing together. This has been a learning experience. Things have hit us and it's been a long, tough season. I'm excited about the future and excited to get out on the road recruiting.

Middle Tennessee Running Back Dwone Hicks

"This is a great way to go out. We beat a very good football team today and I am proud of the way the guys stepped up and played today. We felt pretty good out there on offense today and were fortunate to make a few big plays. I am happy to get 1,000 yards but all the credit goes to our offensive line. If not for them opening up the holes, I would never have had a chance. That was just good blocking on the long run in the second half."

Utah State Head Coach Mike Dennehy

"I think their guys handled [the frustration] better than ours did. It was an embarrassment. Our guys lost their composure and their cool. Their offense just outplayed us. We are down one score and then all of the sudden we are down three scores. It was a crazy game. It was frustrating right from the beginning. [Middle Tennessee] just completely dominated the big picture in the second half."

"Dwone Hicks is a great football player. He is every bit as good as advertised. He is one person that I will be glad not to face next year. He is a very talented kid."

Utah State LB Jesse Busta

"The first five minutes in to it was a catastrophe out there. They did a good job of coming out in the second half. You have to give it to them. They made some big plays."

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