

May 1, 2009

Reese Smith Jr. Field



The campus of Middle Tennessee is home to what is considered to be one of the finest collegiate baseball fields in the nation. The 2,600-seat stadium was named in October of 1982, and was officially dedicated on April 12, 1983, at a ceremony prior to the Blue Raiders' matchup with Vanderbilt University.

This dedication was a well-earned salute to the efforts of the late Reese Smith Jr. and family. In 1979, Smith, a Nashville alumnus, and his two sons who had played baseball for the Blue Raiders, threw their efforts into lighting the field and building the stadium that now exists.

In 1989, Smith Field underwent extensive renovation to increase seating capacity and make the park more fan-friendly.

The old chain link backstop was replaced by a three-foot high brick wall with blue netting hanging from dugout to dugout. Two sets of aluminum bleachers were moved up to the wall and a section of chair-back theater seats was constructed directly behind home plate.

The chain link fence around the park has been replaced with a brick and ornamental iron gate. There is also direct access to the field from the new clubhouse. The dimension of the park is 330 feet down the lines, 365 up the power alleys and 39 to straight away center field.

The lighted facility includes media accommodations in the spacious press box, a concession stand, handicapped seating, and restrooms.

The playing field is encircled by wind screens while an eight-foot billboard fence covers the outfield wall. The bullpen areas are completely enclosed and fully turfed. Two turfed hitting cages are located down the right field line.

Smith Field is also equipped with a computerized underground sprinkler system which helps maintain the natural grass playing surface.



Reese Smith Jr. Field is becoming the "showplace of the South." Numerous baseball organizations bring their teams and fans to Middle Tennessee for their events.

Aside from Blue Raider home games, Reese Smith Jr. Field has hosted events such as Ohio Valley Conference Tournaments, Tennessee Junior College Tournaments, and TSSAA state high school tournaments, plus the USA Olympic baseball team.

The field is also home to the Fall Junior College Classic featuring many of Tennessee's junior college teams.

Smith Field is evidence to the success and rich tradition of Blue Raider baseball, as well as its overwhelming support in Middle Tennessee.



October 24, 1998, saw many dreams become reality with the formal dedication of the newly-built Stephen B. Smith Clubhouse and Indoor Training Facility.

The dream of this facility began long before the plans were put into motion. Coach Steve

Peterson began raising the funds for the project nearly 10 years prior to groundbreaking, but the end product certainly made the wait worthwhile.

The Stephen B. Smith Clubhouse and Indoor Training Facility is, without a doubt, the finest facility of its kind in the region, if not the entire nation.

The Clubhouse features a lounge area with a large-screen television, sofa and chairs along with a refreshment area. The lounge is punctuated by hardwood floors with a marble "MT" inlay near the entrance to the building. The front hallway also features the Blue Raiders' sizeable trophy collection and photos of Blue Raiders in the major leagues.

The spacious Chuck Taylor Locker Room offers oak lockers for the players along with exquisite hardwood flooring. The large shower facility is located just off the locker room area.

The Stephen B. Smith Clubhouse and Indoor Training Facility is also home to the offices of the Blue Raider coaching staff, a training room, and a laundry room.

Perhaps the most impressive part of the facility is the second-to-none indoor training area located just off the locker room.

This large space features a clay floor with three mounds and two hitting cages for winter and early spring workouts. It also contains a weight room with conditioning equipment for baseball team use.

The Stephen B. Smith Clubhouse and Indoor Training Facility opens directly onto the field area for easy access for practice and games. Soon after the construction of the building was complete, the structure was connected to the rest of the park with an ornate brick and iron fence and gate.

The Stephen B. Smith Clubhouse and Indoor Training Facility is just another testament to the hard work and dedication of the Blue Raiders' coaches, players and supporters. The work that these individuals carry onto the field also carries over into every aspect of the program.

However, the Stephen B. Smith Clubhouse and Indoor Training Facility does not mark the end of the line. In the words of Coach Peterson at the building's dedication, "Our next project begins tomorrow."

