Clemson Downs MT 37-14

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CLEMSON, S.C. - Behind a stellar performance from quarterback Charlie Whitehurst, the Clemson Tigers downed Middle Tennessee, 37-14, before 71,000 fans at Death Valley.

The Tigers scored on their opening possession to take a 6-0 lead and never looked back as they rolled up 481 yards of total offense, including 298 through the air. Following an 11-play, eighty-eight yard Clemson drive that ended in a touchdown to put the Tigers up 13-0, the Blue Raiders got on the scoreboard. Middle Tennessee went 81 yards on 10 plays and capped the drive off with a four-yard touchdown run by Eugene Gross to make the score 13-7.

The score would prove to be as close as the Blue Raiders would come in the game, however, as the Tigers reeled off 24 unanswered point before sophomore Josh Harris, seeing his first extended action of the year, led the Blue Raiders 78 yards downfield for the team's second touchdown of the game, ending the scoring for both teams. Kevin Davis registered his first career TD with a four-yard plunge to cap the drive.

Don Calloway led the Blue Raider offensive attack with 62 yards on 13 carries, but it was Davis that ignited the offense late in the game. Davis racked up 61 yards on only six carries and a score. Eugene Gross added 37 yards on eight rushes. QB Andrico Hines completed 10 of his 15 pass attempts for 103 yards.

The Blue Raiders will hit the road once against next week, traveling to Missouri for a 1 PM kickoff on Saturday.

NOTES O-LINE MOVES: The Blue Raiders made a few moves along the offensive line for the Clemson game as left tackle Julius Gant went to right guard and redshirt freshman Willie Hall made his first collegiate start at left tackle. Hall was so impressive in last week's game at Georgia that the coaches felt he had to be on the field.

BLOCK THAT KICK: WR Pierre Ingram came up with his first career blocked kick when he rejected Clemson's extra point following their first quarter touchdown to start the game. Under McCollum, the Blue Raiders have now blocked 10 kicks with four being punts, four extra points and two field goals.

CAREER DAY FOR HOLIDAY: Junior wide receiver Pedro Holiday entered today's game with one career reception and against the Tigers he broke out with two catches for 28 yards.

GROSS UNDER CENTER: Middle Tennessee opened the game with Eugene Gross at quarterback in a move similar to last year when the Blue Raiders would occasionally put ReShard Lee at the helm. Gross, who went for five yards on a run from the QB position to start the contest, made the first start of his Blue Raider career.

DAVIS ENJOYS CAREER DAY: Redshirt freshman Kevin Davis was given his opportunity today and he seized the moment. The Pine Mountain, Ga., native rushed for 61 yards on six carries and added his first career touchdown when he scored on a one-yard run.

HARRIS GETS TIME UNDER CENTER: Sophomore Josh Harris, a native of Union, SC, entered the game in the third quarter and promptly drove the Blue Raiders 78 yards in 10 plays for a touchdown. It was Harris' first collegiate touchdown drive at the helm of the offense. Harris finished the day 2-for-7 passing for 31 yards.

GROSS HAS TOP TEN EFFORT: Eugene Gross had 122 yards on kickoff returns today, which was good enough to place seventh on the all-time single-game list. Gross had a total of six returns, which tied for the sixth most in school history. Gross entered the day with just five returns for 89 yards on the season.

TIDBITS: RB Kevin Davis made his first collegiate start today at tailback ... DB Chris Johnson made his first start today at left corner since getting the nod in the secondary against Mississippi in 2001. Johnson started for the injured Tony Sutton ... Senior Michael Woods recorded his first career sack when he dropped Charlie Whitehurst early in the third quarter. It was the eighth sack of the year for MT ... Senior Ryan Edmiston recorded his first career reception today when he hauled one in for 10 yards in the third quarter. Edmiston went on to finish the game with two receptions for 20 yards ... DL John Henry saw action today in his first collegiate game when he entered the contest late in the third quarter ... QB Clint Marks saw the first action of his career late in the fourth quarter.

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