MT Holds Off Troy State 27-20

November 9, 2003 · MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -- Kerry Wright became the first MT receiver to eclipse the 1,000-yard mark and his 56-yard TD catch with 9:33 left to play helped propel the Blue Raiders to their third win of the season.

Wright for 1,000: Kerry Wright became the first 1,000-yard receiver in Middle Tennessee history with his effort against Troy State tonight. Wright, who entered the game needing only 32 yards to reach the plateau, tallied 97 yards on four catches against the Trojans. In a fitting end to his 1,000-yard chase, Wright's record-breaking catch was a 56-yard TD grab in the fourth quarter. The TD catch was his eighth of the year, which ties the single-season record at MT. Wright now has 59 catches for 1,065 yards on the year.

Billings Gets It Started: Punter Robert Billings scored his first career touchdown on Middle Tennessee's first possession. On fourth and one, Billings lined up for a punt in the team's swinging gate formation. He then took a direct snap around right end and rambled 54 yards to give Middle Tennessee the lead. It wasn't Billing's first career rush, but it was the longest of his career.

Defensive Stand: The Blue Raider defense answered the call this week, holding Troy State to 349 yards offense. The defensive effort tonight resulted in the second-lowest offensive output for an opponent this season. The Blue Raiders also blocked a PAT try and forced two turnovers in the contest, including a game-clinching interception by LB Randy Arnold.

Defensive Leader: FS Will Martin tallied 11 tackles against the Trojans, giving him three straight game in which he has recorded double-digit stops. Martin's streak started with a season-high 13 tackles against North Texas and continued with 10 last week at Utah State. Martin now leads the defense with 85 tackles on the year.

O-Line Changes: The Blue Raider offensive line took on a new look against Troy State. Josh Willoughby made his first career start at center, while Brandon Westbrook moved back to left tackle

for the first time this season. Moving back to right tackle was Julius Gant, who has played nearly every o-line spot this season. Bill Brasch and Germayle Franklin started at right and left guard respectively.

Block that Kick: The Blue Raiders blocked their 12th kick under Andy McCollum with Thomas Johnson's fourth quarter knockdown of an extra point try. The Blue Raiders have now blocked three kicks this year with two coming from Pierre Ingram. Of the Blue Raiders' 12 blocks, six are extra points, four are punts, and two are field goals.

Kickin' Kelly: Brian Kelly connected on his 36th career field goal in the fourth quarter, moving him into third place all time in the Middle Tennessee record book. Kelly's second quarter FG tied him with former Blue Raiders Keegan Ray and Joe Lisle before moving ahead later in the game. Kelly is now two field goals away from equaling Garth Petrelli for second place on the all-time list.

Alexander Automotive Family Player of the Game: QB Andrico Hines was named tonight's Alexander Automotive Family Player of the Game after turning in yet another solid effort under center. Hines was 15-of-22 passing for 167 yards and a touchdown. He also ran nine times for 90 yards and another score.

Quick Hitters: Robert Billings' first quarter TD marked only the third time this season that the Blue Raiders had scored on their first possession ... LB Dennis Burke recovered his first fumble of the season in the second quarter ... K Bryan Kelly attempted and made his first field goal since booting two against Idaho on Oct. 18 ... QB Andrico Hines' 40-yard TD jaunt in the third quarter is his longest career run from scrimmage ... DL Thomas Johnson blocked his second career kick on an extra-point try in the fourth quarter ... LB Randy Arnold's fourth quarter interception was his second of the year, tying him with Michael Woods for the team lead ... Middle Tennessee eclipsed the 100-yard rushing mark for the first time in three games ... MT was +2 in the takeaway department tonight, marking the first time the team has been turnover-free since the New Mexico State game ... SS Justin Rainey made a career-high nine tackles in the game ... LB Dennis Burke turned in nine tackles, equaling his season high.

Printed on March 12, 2014
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/2462