

November 20, 2007

Blue Raiders Lose Regular Season Finale

Chicola scores lone touchdown

MT Media Relations

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TROY, Ala. - The 2007 season came to a close for Middle Tennessee on Tuesday night as the Blue Raiders fell 45-7 to league leader Troy University.

Middle Tennessee ends the season 5-7 overall and 4-3 in Sun Belt Conference play.

Two fumbles, one interception and a blocked punt hurt the Blue Raiders as Troy capitalized on each opportunity obtained by these errors.

Starting quarterback [Joe Craddock](#) ended the night 18 of 25 with one touchdown for 116 yards and one interception. On the ground, Craddock ended the night with eight carries for 40 yards. The Blue Raiders had 209 yards of total offense.

Troy broke the game open in the second quarter on a fumbled punt return by [Desmond Gee](#) which was recovered by Troy at the 26-yard line setting up the drive to let the Trojans to extend the lead, 24-7.

Middle Tennessee never recovered in the game as Troy held the ball for 10:62 seconds in the third quarter to score two touchdowns. Troy also converted on all 7 of 7 red zone opportunities compared to the Blue Raiders who converted 1 of 1 in the red zone. Middle Tennessee also had just 12 first downs in the game.

[DeMarco McNair](#) led Middle Tennessee in the running game with 10 carries for 43 yards while Gee led Middle Tennessee in receptions with five for 41 yards.

Troy's Omar Haugabook completed 16 of 29 passes for 194 yards with one touchdown while rushing for another two. Haugabook also led the team with 16 carries for 64 yards as Troy had 551 yards of total offense.

Defensively, [Alex Suber](#) led Middle Tennessee with nine tackles while [Damon Nickson](#) and Daniel Carmichael each had seven. Nickson also had a sack in the game.

In the first quarter, [Ted Riley](#) was called for pass interference which resulted in a 15-yard penalty resetting the chains and two plays later give Troy its first touchdown with 6:20 remaining in the first quarter.

Middle Tennessee responded with a score of its own after a five-yard pass to [Stephen Chicola](#) from [Joe Craddock](#). Craddock set up the first and goal situation for the Blue Raiders in the scoring drive after a career high 33-yard run.

After the touchdown by Middle Tennessee, Troy's Greg Whibbs kicked a 41-yard field goal to take a 10-7 lead after a sack by [Erik Walden](#) and Lonnie Clemons stalled the drive.

With 12:01 remaining in the second quarter Troy's R.J. Roberts blocked a punt by [David DeFatta](#) to give the Trojans the ball on the four-yard line. Three plays later Haugabook scored after a six-yard carry to give Troy the 17-7 lead.

GAMENOTES

ROBINSON TIES SBC RECORD: Senior [Bradley Robinson](#) picked up his 14th career interception and tied the all-time Sun Belt Conference record. His 14 picks equals the amount Chris Harris (ULM) and Johnathan Burke (ASU) amassed during their careers. Robinson's fifth interception of the season also tied him with Cedric Stegall for second place on Middle Tennessee's all-time list and leaves him three shy of the career record of 17 held by James Griffin.

BIG PUNT FOR DEFATTA: [David DeFatta](#), who has enjoyed a great season punting the football, recorded his career long against Troy when he nailed a 70-yarder in the fourth quarter. The 70-yard boot equaled the fifth longest in school history. DeFatta also had three punts downed inside the 20-yard line to run his league-leading total to 28 this season.



David DeFatta recorded a career long a 70-yard punt in the fourth quarter. (MT Athletics)

JONES PASSES SCANDRETT: Senior [Tavares Jones](#), who leads the Blue Raiders in sacks, moved up another notch on the all-time sack list at MT with one against Troy Tuesday night. Jones surpassed Devarick Scandrett for third place and ends his career with 12.5 sacks. All of Jones' sacks have come in the last 22 games.

JUST SHORT: Junior [Joe Craddock](#) opened the game against Troy by completing his first 10 passes and was inching closer to the school record of 15 consecutive completions held by Wes Counts. Craddock saw his streak end toward the end of the first quarter when [Michael Cannon](#) dropped a pass that hit him right in the numbers.

REGULAR SEASON FINALES: Since turning I-A (FBS) in 1999, Middle Tennessee has gone 5-4 in regular season finales and have lost four straight. Three of the four losses have come against Troy.

QUICK HITTERS: QB [Dwight Dasher](#) made his first collegiate reception when he hauled in a 10-yard pass from [Joe Craddock](#) ... Middle Tennessee's fumble of a punt in the second quarter was its first lost fumble since the Memphis game ... QB [Joe Craddock](#)'s 34-yard run in the first quarter was the longest of his career ... TE [Stephen Chicola](#)'s TD catch in the first quarter was his first of the season and the fourth of his career ... Freshman [Jeremy Kellem](#) recorded his second sack of the season against Troy ... OT [Franklin Dunbar](#) made his team-best 30th straight start tonight while DT [Trevor Jenkins](#) made his 25th straight start ... [Damon Nickson](#) recorded his third career sack tonight against Troy ... Senior [Dana Stewart](#) recorded his second interception of the season and the second of his career late in the fourth quarter ... The blocked punt against the Blue Raiders by Troy marked the first punt MT has had blocked since Tennessee Tech recorded one on Sept. 14, 2006.

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