

March 10, 2008

Blue Raiders announce 2008 football schedule

ESPN2 coming to 'Boro for 'Black-Out' night

MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The first prime time national broadcast by ESPN from Floyd Stadium highlights the 2008 Middle Tennessee football schedule as announced today by Director of Athletics Chris Massaro.

- **New!** [Desktop Background](#)

The Blue Raiders will host defending conference champion Florida Atlantic on ESPN2 on Tuesday night September 30 in what will be promoted as 'Black-Out' night. Fans are encouraged to purchase official 'Black-Out' t-shirts that are scheduled to be available in late spring when the final design has been approved. It will mark the sixth national broadcast for the Blue Raiders under Rick Stockstill and the first by ESPN or ESPN2 from Floyd Stadium.

"We have had several games on national television but there is something different about playing that type of game at home," said Massaro. "This provides an opportunity for Middle Tennessee to showcase our fans, facilities, football program, and the Sun Belt Conference to the potential prospects who may be watching."

An impressive home schedule will see the Blue Raiders take on conference foe Troy on Thursday night to begin the 2008 slate followed by back-to-back contests against bowl teams Maryland of the ACC and Florida Atlantic. The Blue Raiders will also entertain Louisiana-Monroe, who upset Alabama last year, and North Texas. The Mean Green had the nation's 18th-ranked passing offense a year ago.

"When I was hired at Middle Tennessee one of the important topics for me was to upgrade our home schedule," said Massaro. "I believe we have steadily worked toward this goal. This season's home schedule is one I believe our fans will enjoy."

Middle Tennessee's non-conference schedule has an SEC flare but will also see the Blue Raiders taking on the ACC and Big East. Along with Maryland, the Blue Raiders will travel to 2007 Music City Bowl champion Kentucky on September 13 for just the second meeting in school history.

The Blue Raiders will stay in Kentucky for their next out of conference contest when they head to Louisville on Oct. 18 to face the Cardinals at Papa John's Stadium. It will mark the third straight year the two teams have faced each other and the first time on a Saturday. The very next week, Middle Tennessee will battle 2007 Liberty Bowl champion, Mississippi State, in Starkville. It will be the third meeting between the Blue Raiders and Bulldogs and the first since 2000.

Middle Tennessee will conclude its non-conference schedule and tour through the state of Kentucky when it takes on neighboring rival Western Kentucky on November 15. It will be the Blue Raiders' first trip to Bowling Green since the 1991 season.

Along with conference road dates against Arkansas State on September 20 and Florida International on October 11, the Blue Raiders will complete the regular season on December 3 at Louisiana-Lafayette. The Wednesday night special will air on ESPN Regional.

"One of the things I like about our schedule is that we play our first two games at home and that has not happened here since 1972," added Stockstill. "I also think it is great for our fans that we play 10 of our 12 games within an easy driving distance so we will be able to get a lot of support on the road."

"It is a challenging schedule that presents us with a lot of opportunities and we look forward to getting things started in August."

SCHEDULE NOTES

Middle Tennessee will face four bowl teams from a year ago and three of those were bowl champs (Kentucky, Mississippi State, FAU) ... MT will play all three FBS teams in the state of Kentucky ... The Blue Raiders will play games on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday in 2008 ... The Troy game will mark the fourth Thursday night home game for the Blue Raiders since Chris Massaro became AD ... The December 3 contest at ULL will match the latest date for a regular season game in school history (Dec. 3 at FIU in 2005) ... A fan-friendly schedule, the Blue Raiders play just two games that are more than 241 miles from Murfreesboro (FIU, ULL) ... Seven of the 12 opponents had non-losing records in 2007 and four had at least eight wins.

2008 MIDDLE TENNESSEE FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Aug. 28 *TROY (ESPN Regional)



Coach Stockstill and the Blue Raiders will play 10 of 12 games within 240 miles of Murfreesboro in 2008. ()

Sept. 6 **MARYLAND**
Sept. 13 at Kentucky
Sept. 20 *at Arkansas State
Sept. 30 ***FLORIDA ATLANTIC** (ESPN2) ('Black-Out' night)
Oct. 4 OPEN
Oct. 11 *at Florida International
Oct. 18 at Louisville
Oct. 25 at Mississippi State
Nov. 1 OPEN
Nov. 8 ***LOUISIANA-MONROE**
Nov. 15 at Western Kentucky
Nov. 22 ***NORTH TEXAS**
Dec. 3 *at Louisiana-Lafayette (ESPN Regional)
Dec. 19 New Orleans Bowl (ESPN2)
*Sun Belt Conference Game

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