Raiders Explode in Second Half for 37-24 Victory

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -- Middle Tennessee scored 20 unanswered points in the second half to break open a tie game and defeat Louisiana-Monroe, 37-24, Saturday afternoon at Floyd Stadium.

The Blue Raiders scored on the opening possession of the game and then recovered the ensuing kickoff and scored again for an early 14-0 lead. But the Indians came back with a pair of touchdowns in the second quarter for a 17-all contest at halftime.

Kerry Wright gave Middle Tennessee the lead for good with a 37-yard TD catch in the third quarter, setting a new single-season mark for TD catches with 10 in the process. Kicker Colby Smith added a pair of field goals before Cleannord Saintil's 27-yard scamper on a reverse in the fourth quarter made it 37-17.

Wright caught eight passes for 126 yards, his fifth 100-yard receiving game of the season, while quarterback Clint Marks was 26-of-36 for 241 yards and two touchdowns, both to Wright.

Middle Tennessee also rushed for a season-high 213 yards, with Lee Baker contributing 88 and Terry Jackson 82.

The Blue Raiders finish the season next week with a 6 p.m. contest at Troy University.

2004 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
POSTGAME NOTES
Louisiana-Monroe at Middle Tennessee
November 13, 2004; Murfreesboro, TN

WRIGHT HAS RECORD DAY: Kerry Wright enjoyed a nice senior day at Floyd Stadium as he set two receiving records. With his two touchdown receptions, Wright broke his single-season mark of nine set in 2003 and tied Kendall Newson and Herbert Owenby for the top spot on Middle

Tennessee's career list. Wright now has 10 touchdown grabs this season and 21 for his career.

MARKS PASSES IRONSIDE: With 26 completions, Clint Marks surpassed Phil Ironside for eighth place on the all-time list. The sophomore now has 242 career completions and needs 44 more to take over seventh place (Billy Walker, 286.

JACKSON HAS CAREER DAY: Redshirt freshman Terry Jackson ran for a career-high 82 yards on 10 attempts against ULM. Jackson, who had a 45-yard run on his first attempt of the day, bettered his previous mark of 77 yards set earlier this season against Idaho.

BAKER HAS CAREER DAY TOO: Junior Lee Baker, who sat out last week's game due to disciplinary reasons, ran for a career-high 88 yards on 12 attempts against ULM. Baker, who had a career long 31-yard run, bettered his previous mark of 52 yards set earlier this season against Utah State.

HENRY MOVES UP: WR Chris Henry, who is having a career year for the Blue Raiders, moved up the single-season receptions list today. The junior reeled in six receptions to run his season total to 55 and move past Sulecio Sanford for seventh place.

SMITH IN TOP FIVE: Lou Groza Award finalist Colby Smith connected on three field goals (tied personal mark) today to run his season total to 14. That mark ties him with Joe Lisle and Kelly Potter for second place on the single-season list. For the season, Smith is 14-for-16 in the field goal department for an 87.5 percentage. That percentage ranks second-best in school history for a single-season. Smith needs one more make to tie for 10th with Gerald Robinson on the career list at Middle Tennessee.

WRIGHT TOPS 100 ... AGAIN: WR Kerry Wright topped the 100-yard receiving mark for the 10th time in his career with eight catches for 126 yards in the win over Louisiana-Monroe. Wright now has five 100-yard games on the season to match his total from a year ago. The all-time record for 100-yard games is 14 set by Kendall Newson and Wright's total of 10 ranks No. 2 on the list.

MORE WRIGHT: Kerry Wright's big receiving day enabled him to top the 1,000-yard mark for season receiving yardage. With 126 yards today on eight receptions, Wright ran his 2004 total to 1,015 yards to become the first player in school history to record two 1,000-yard seasons in a career. Also, Wright ran his reception total to 73 on the season, tying his own mark for second on the list.

MARKS SET RECORD: With 241 passing yards today against Louisiana-Monroe, QB Clint Marks established a new single-season yardage record. Marks ran his season total to 2,618 yards to surpass Wes Counts (2,603 yards in 1999) for the all-time record.

GETTING IT DONE ON THE GROUND: The Blue Raiders rushed 38 times for a season-high 213 yards in the win, besting the previous high by 48 yards (165 vs. Idaho). It was the most yards on the ground since rushing for 222 at Idaho on October 18, 2003.

TIDBITS: Middle Tennessee has now scored points on its opening drive of the game for the fifth time over the past seven contests ... Sean Mosley recorded his second sack of the season when he dropped Monroe's Steven Jyles in the first quarter. Mosley added another sack later in the game ... Lee Baker's first quarter touchdown run was the fourth of the season for the junior college transfer ... Kerry Wright has now caught at least two passes in 22 straight games ... The Blue Raiders' streak of

six straight quarters without allowing a point at home ended in the first quarter today when ULM connected on a field goal ... LB Dennis Burke's second quarter interception was the second of his career and his first this season ... OL Germayle Franklin started his 14th straight game today, which ranks as the longest streak on the team ... Junior fullback Nick McAfee had his first career rushing attempt today in the second quarter and it went for minus 4-yards ... Colby Smith booted a career long 61-yard punt in the second quarter ... Middle Tennessee continued its third quarter dominance over Louisiana-Monroe by winning the third stanza, 10-0. In five all-time meetings, the Blue Raiders have outscored ULM a combined 40-7 ... QB Clint Marks recorded his school-record eighth 200-yard passing game of the season and the ninth of his career to rank fourth on the all-time list ... The Blue Raiders are now 5-1 under Andy McCollum in final regular season home games ... Middle Tennessee improved to 11-3 all-time at home in Sun Belt competition ... The Blue Raiders are now 25-3 under McCollum when leading at the half and 30-15 when scoring more than 20 points.

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