

February 5, 2009

## Stockstill tabs Franklin as offensive coordinator

### New coach thrives on wide-open, fast paced attack

*Athletic Communications*

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** - Middle Tennessee Head Coach Rick Stockstill announced today the hiring of Tony Franklin as the Blue Raiders' new offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach. Franklin takes over for G.A. Mangus who served in the same capacity the past three years.

"We are excited to have Tony joining our staff," said Stockstill. "I know he can help us expand our offensive philosophy while bringing a lot of energy and enthusiasm to that side of the ball."

"He will also be a very valuable asset in recruiting because of his many contacts throughout the country."

Franklin comes to Middle Tennessee after a brief stint as the offensive coordinator at Auburn in 2008 and the previous two seasons in the same capacity at Troy. Franklin uses a wide open offensive attack that spreads the ball to players in an unusually fast paced, no huddle scheme.

In two seasons at Troy, the Trojans went 16-9 overall and 12-2 in the Sun Belt Conference while collecting two conference championships. During that span his offense scored 30 or more points 11 times, including games against Florida, Georgia, and Oklahoma State.

"I am glad to be coming to Middle Tennessee and working with Coach Stockstill, his staff, and meeting the players," said Franklin. "I am very familiar with Middle Tennessee because of our conference affiliation when I was at Troy and I can't wait to get started. The one thing I am excited about is getting to know all the people and becoming part of the Blue Raider family."

In his first season at Troy, in addition to helping the Trojans to their first Sun Belt Conference title and a victory in the New Orleans Bowl, Franklin also helped engineer the second ranked offensive unit in the Sun Belt just one year after the team ranked last in the league in total offense. The Trojans ranked first in the league in passing offense, again one year after ranking last, despite having faced three of the top 20 ranked passing defense teams in the country during the season, and improved in conference scoring from 12 points to 25 points per game.

Franklin also recruited 2006 Sun Belt Conference Player of the Year Omar Haugabook who swept the top conference honors at seasons end. Haugabook also led the league in passing yards per game, completions and passing efficiency.

In 2007, the Trojans ranked 16th nationally in total offense and 25th in scoring offense.

Franklin joined the University of Kentucky football staff in 1997 following 16 years as a high school football coach. During his four year tenure at UK, the Wildcats enjoyed unprecedented success on the offensive side of the ball, including setting several NCAA, SEC and school records.

After coaching running backs for three seasons, Franklin was named offensive coordinator for the 2000 season and led the Wildcats to the nation's second best passing offense, as well as the nation's 11th best team in total offense.

Franklin's two back combinations at Kentucky out gained any two back combinations in the SEC in total yards from scrimmage for three straight seasons. Quarterbacks Tim Couch, Dusty Bonner, and Jared Lorenzen each led the SEC in passing during their tenure as UK's quarterback and Couch was the first player selected in the 1999 NFL draft. Several other UK players reached their goals in making NFL teams after their experience in the high powered offense.

Franklin was also named one of the top 10 recruiters in the South during his four years at Kentucky as he helped lead the Wildcats to their first back-to-back bowl appearances in 15 years and their first New Year's Bowl game appearance in 50 seasons.

In 2001, Franklin authored a nationally acclaimed book, *Fourth Down and Life To Go*, which chronicled the good, bad and ugly experiences of his college football journey.

In 2003, Franklin was chosen to lead the expansion franchise Lexington Horsemen football team in their inaugural season in the NIFL. The Horsemen exceeded expectations for an expansion franchise and earned a birth in the playoffs with a 9-5 record, while setting records for attendance and leading the Atlantic Division in scoring at more than 50 points per game.



Tony Franklin was hired as the Blue Raiders' offensive coordinator on Thursday.

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USA Today took notice of Franklin's football coaching and teaching abilities in a feature story in 2005 which detailed his consulting successes as a nationally sought after offensive football coach.

Franklin also received rave reviews for his second book, *Victor's Victory*, which chronicled the tragic death and spectacular life of 15 year old Hoover High football player, Victor Dionte Hill. Hill died from sudden cardiac arrest on the football practice field during one of Franklin's consulting sessions. The book has helped to continue the mission of Cheryl Hill, Victor's mother, to make teachers, coaches, and parents aware of the need for automatic external defibrillators (AED's) in every school and youth organization in Alabama.

Franklin achieved both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in education from Murray State University where he was a two year starter as a running back. He is married to Laura Franklin and they have three girls: Chelsea (24), Caroline (21), and Caitlin (19).

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