

August 15, 2009

Big plays highlight first scrimmage

Team goes 105 plays at Floyd Stadium

Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee held its first scrimmage of fall camp on Saturday and Head Coach Rick Stockstill was pleased with his team's performance at Floyd Stadium.

The 105-play scrimmage was filled with big plays on both sides of the ball with the offense scoring four touchdowns and a field goal while the defense scored on back-to-back interceptions and added six sacks.

"For a first scrimmage I was pleased with our effort and the way we competed," said Stockstill. "There were a lot of nice individual plays out there today and some really nice hits. We have only had six days of practice so I like where we are after the first week. We still have a long ways to go but I like our progress."

Along with some big plays by the defense, one of the highlights was the play of quarterback [Dwight Dasher](#). The junior completed 13 of 18 passes for 133 yards to go with a touchdown and one interception.

"I thought Dwight did a good job managing the offense," added Stockstill. "He made some nice throws and reads and didn't force a lot of stuff."

The Blue Raiders got on the scoreboard early in the game behind backup quarterback [Brent Burnette](#). The redshirt freshman guided the offense on a 7-play, 70-yard drive that ended with a six-yard pass to walk-on [Shane Blissard](#) for the games first touchdown. Burnette, who was 7-for-13 for 121 yards (2 TDs, 1 INT) on the day, had three straight completions of 16, 24, and 20 yards to key the drive.

"I think if Shane (Blissard) continues to improve we could use him this season," said Stockstill. "He's worked hard and improved, so if he continues these next three weeks he's got a chance to help us this year."

Dasher then had the offense on the move again before [Derrick Crumpton](#) stripped [Desmond Gee](#) of the ball after an 8-yard catch. Cornerback [Rod Issac](#) came up with the fumble to thwart the drive.

After two stops by the defense, Dasher and company went to work. The Folkston, Ga., native completed 4 of 5 passes and engineered a 9-play, 50-yard drive that ended with a 6-yard touchdown run by [Phillip Tanner](#).

The defense promptly turned up the heat when they picked off passes on back-to-back plays to even things up. Senior linebacker [Cam Robinson](#) jumped a slant pass from Burnette and went 50 yards for the score, then seconds later Issac grabbed a Dasher pass in the flat and raced 65 yards for another score.

"Dwight was late with his pass in the flat and Rod (Issac) made a nice play," said Stockstill. "On Brent's interception I believe he threw it in there blind. You could see he forced it, but those things are going to happen. You just hope you don't have a whole bunch of them."

The defense came up with three more scoreless series before Dasher got the offense back in the end zone. In his last series of the day, Dasher wasted little time by going 40 yards in just two plays. After a 15-yard pass to Tanner, Dasher hit Gee in the left corner of the end zone on a beautiful 25-yard strike.

"I feel more comfortable everyday with our offense," said Dasher. "Other than a few missed assignments, I thought we did pretty well today. I was having a lot of fun out there."

The offense later scored on a 39-yard field goal by [Alan Gendreau](#) and a 25-yard pass from Burnette to Blissard.

Defensively, the Blue Raiders had three interceptions, a fumble recovery, six sacks, and 14 tackles for loss. Along with Robinson and Issac's interceptions, freshman [Justin Jones](#) also had a pick for the Blue Raiders while [Kendall Dangerfield](#), [Jamari Lattimore](#), [Phillip Tinsley](#), [Derrek Upshaw](#), [Dwight Smith](#), and [Jimmy Staten](#) all recorded sacks.

The Blue Raiders will return to the practice field on Sunday afternoon.



The Blue Raiders had a physical, hard hitting scrimmage on Saturday. ()

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