

September 9, 2009

## Season tips off Nov. 13

### Blue Raiders release schedule, hit the pavement early

MT Athletic Communications

[Complete 2009-10 Schedule](#)

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** - The Middle Tennessee men's basketball program will play 16 regular season games in Murphy Center during the 2009-10 season as announced by head coach Kermit Davis on Wednesday.

For the second straight year, Middle Tennessee will play host to nationally ranked Tennessee. The Blue Raiders will face the Vols as part of a doubleheader with Western Kentucky and Vanderbilt at the Sommet Center in Nashville, Tenn., which will be included in the season ticket package.

The Tennessee game will be broadcast on CSS and other television games will be announced on [goblueraiders.com](http://goblueraiders.com) as they are scheduled.

Middle Tennessee will hit the trail early during the campaign as it plays four of its first seven on the road facing the likes of Ohio, Marshall and UAB.

"I think we will be tested very early in the nonconference schedule by playing teams from the SEC, Conference USA, MAC and A-Sun. To open the season we have four of our first seven games on the road which will be a difficult task," Davis said. "I think the games at Ohio, Marshall, UAB and Vanderbilt will be games that will really prepare us to go on the road and to play in a much improved Sun Belt Conference."

The Blue Raiders will open the Sun Belt season at New Orleans on Dec. 31 before playing host to UL-Lafayette on Jan. 2.

Middle Tennessee will then play at Vanderbilt on Jan. 4 before getting into the thick of Sun Belt action. Vanderbilt will play in Murphy Center during the 2010-11 season as part of a five-year deal between the two schools which began last season.

"We have 16 home games that will go in our season ticket package which includes Tennessee in Nashville on Dec. 11. We started a four-year series with UAB and they will play us in Murphy Center next season," added Davis.

Davis believes the competition will be much higher in the Sun Belt Conference this season with the addition of new coaches and student-athletes.

"I really think the 18 league games will be the most difficult 18-game league schedule we have ever played since I have been here. I think the balance top-to-bottom will be the best it has been. Each team has had excellent recruiting years and there are a lot of really good returning players in our league," Davis said. "We are trying to prepare ourselves for the Sun Belt season and I think we will definitely do that with our non-conference schedule."

Middle Tennessee will play host to Florida Atlantic, Florida International, Denver, New Orleans, South Alabama, Troy and Western Kentucky as part of its Sun Belt home schedule.

The Sun Belt Conference tournament will feature a new format this season with the elimination of host sites for the first rounds. All tournament games will be played in Hot Springs, Ark., as part of a three-year deal that began with the 2008-09 season. The Sun Belt Championships are slated to begin March 6 and run through March 9.

Middle Tennessee returns six players off last year's squad and adds seven newcomers. Senior [Desmond Yates](#), a three-time All-Sun Belt performer, will help lead a team that has five seniors.

"My staff and I are very excited about this group early on and blending the veterans with the seven new guys has been a lot of fun. After the first week of practice we are off to a great start. I am also very excited about the talent the newcomers bring with them in addition to the talented seasoned players we have on this squad," Davis said.

For ticket information, please contact the Middle Tennessee ticket office at 1-888-YES-MTSU.



Senior Desmond Yates, a three-time All-Sun Belt performer, will help lead a 2009-10 squad with five seniors. ()

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