

October 30, 2009

Blue Raiders head to the Sunshine State to take on FAU Saturday MT has not played on Halloween since 1998

Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Having already lost to pre-season Sun Belt favorite Troy, Middle Tennessee needs to win at Florida Atlantic on Saturday to stay near the top of the SBC standings. The game will be at FAU's Lockhart Field in Fort Lauderdale, with kickoff set for 3:00 pm CDT. It will be just the second game all season that will not be televised.

A Blue Raider win would insure that they would remain in a tie for second with a 3-1 conference mark. SBC leaders Troy (4-0) and ULM (3-0) play at Troy on Saturday, with the winner gaining undisputed possession of first place, and the loser dropping into the "one-loss" category. Should the Blue Raiders prevail at FAU, they would also be joined by Louisiana-Lafayette (2-1) if the Ragin Cajuns win at Florida International.

FAU is also 2-1 in SBC play, having lost to ULM at home, and having won road games at North Texas and UL-Lafayette.

Both teams played well last week. The Blue Raiders pounded Western Kentucky, 62-24, while the Owls posted a 51-29 win over UL-Lafayette.

Middle Tennessee Head Coach Rick Stockstill feels his team will have to score a lot of points to win.

"Looking at their offense, and the way they have played lately, we are going to have to score points," said Stockstill. "You do not want a shootout, but you never know."

FAU has two of the most potent offensive weapons in the Sun Belt in senior QB Rusty Smith and sophomore running back Alfred Morris. Smith is a former Sun Belt Player of the Year (2007) and was the MVP of the New Orleans Bowl that year. He could surpass the 10,000-yard mark for career passing against the Blue Raiders, needing 194 yards to do so.

Morris, who Stockstill describes as "a downhill, physical runner with good speed" is leading the SBC in rushing, averaging 117.5 points per game, and has scored six touchdowns.

Stockstill noted that FAU "has a very experienced offensive line with good speed. Smith has had some time to sit back there and throw the ball."

For Middle Tennessee, the win over Western was the most prolific offensive output of the season. QB [Dwight Dasher](#) accounted for 421 yards of total offense, including a career-best 355 passing. His favorite receiver was senior [Chris McClover](#), who caught two touchdown passes and accounted for a personal-best 149 receiving yards.

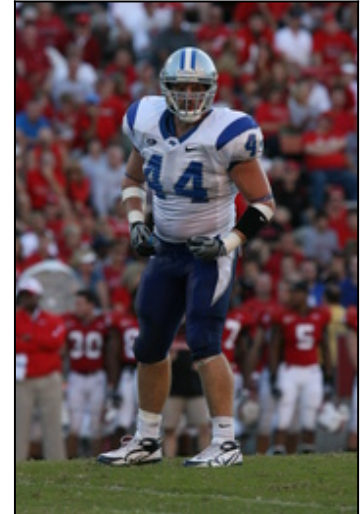
Defensively, senior linebacker [Danny Carmichael](#) heads a defense that is known for creating turnovers and making tackles behind the line of scrimmage. Carmichael is among the nation's leaders in forced fumbles with four this season, ranking him in a tie for sixth nationally. He has also passed the 200 mark for career tackles, and now has 215. He has also recorded 26 tackles for loss and nine sacks at Middle Tennessee to rank among the top 10 leaders all-time.

The Blue Raider defense played well against Western Kentucky, holding the Hilltoppers to only 250 yards of total offense, most of that in the second half after the outcome was decided.

In the kicking game, sophomore [Alan Gendreau](#) leads the Sun Belt in kick scoring with 51 points. He has hit 21-22 extra points, and is a perfect 10-10 in field goal attempts this season to rank 1st nationally in FG percentage.

Intangibles are always a part of the mix, and FAU has two big ones on their side. They are playing at home, and they also have not likely forgotten the Hail Mary pass on the last play of the game in Murfreesboro last year which earned the win for Middle Tennessee. Gendreau's extra point kick with no time left gave the Raiders a stunning 14-13 victory.

Saturday's game will kickoff at 3 pm CDT, and will be broadcast live on the Blue Raider network, featuring Chip Walters and Kelly Holcomb. Network affiliates are WGNS 1450 AM, 101.9 FM and WMOT 89.5 FM in Murfreesboro, WNSR AM 560 in Nashville, and 103.9 FM in Bowling Green, KY.



Danny Carmichael and the Blue Raider defense will have their hands full on Saturday against the Owls. ()

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