

January 7, 2006

## Diaz named defensive coordinator for the Blue Raiders

*MT Media Relations*

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** - Middle Tennessee Head Coach Rick Stockstill announced today the hiring of Manny Diaz as defensive coordinator. Diaz joins the Blue Raiders after spending the past six years on Chuck Amato's staff at N.C. State.

"I am excited that Manny and his family are joining our staff at Middle Tennessee," said Stockstill. "We are getting a very enthusiastic coach who has played a major role in some of the top defensive units in the nation over the past few years. Manny is a young, up-and-coming coach who is recognized in the profession as one of the top recruiters in the southeast."

Diaz, who has been involved in seven bowl games during his eight years on the collegiate level, played a major role for one of the country's top-ranked defenses over the past four years by coaching safeties in 2004 and 2005 and handling the linebackers in 2002 and 2003.

In 2005, the Wolfpack finished eighth nationally in total defense, sixth in third down percentage, and 12th in scoring defense en route to a 7-5 record and a shutout win over South Florida in the Meineke Car Care Bowl. Diaz, who also served as the special team's coordinator, saw his kickoff return unit finish fifth nationally while his punt return team recorded four blocked kicks.

"I am extremely grateful to Coach Stockstill for giving me this opportunity at Middle Tennessee," said Diaz. "It's exciting to come re-energize a program and bring excitement back to the fans and community."


In his first year as safeties coach and special team's coordinator in 2004, N.C. State's defense finished the year as the top-ranked unit in the country in total defense by allowing just over 220 yards per game. The Wolfpack defense also held national powers Ohio State and Florida State to under 130 yards of total offense during the 2004 campaign. Diaz, who coached All-ACC performer and current New York Jet Andre Maddox, also had his punt return team block three kicks and take two returns for touchdowns.

The Miami, Fla., native handled the linebackers for N.C. State in 2002 and 2003. In 2003, the Wolfpack won the Tangerine Bowl and finished 7-5 as Diaz shared play-calling duties for all 11 games. Diaz also made all the defensive calls during the bowl win over Kansas.

In his first year as a full-time coach, Diaz helped the Wolfpack to one of their best seasons ever by finishing 11-3 and defeating Notre Dame in the Gator Bowl. Diaz, who coached All-ACC performer Dantonio Burnette, shared in the play-calling duties as N.C. State ended the year ranked 14th nationally in total defense and 10th in scoring defense. In back-to-back games against Florida State and Notre Dame, N.C. State did not allow an offensive touchdown.

Diaz spent the 2000 and 2001 seasons at N.C. State as a graduate assistant where he worked primarily with the linebacking corps. During this time, the Wolfpack went to two



Manny Diaz, who has been involved with some of the top defenses in the nation the past few years, was named defensive coordinator today. (N.C. State) 

bowl games and became the first ACC team to beat FSU in Tallahassee.

Diaz, whose father is currently serving his second term as Mayor of the City of Miami, began his coaching career at Florida State in 1998 where he worked alongside defensive coordinator Mickey Andrews for two seasons. During his stint, the Seminoles won a National Championship in 1999 and were runners up in 1998.

The 1995 Florida State graduate (B.S. in communications) is married to the former Stephanie Cerow and they have three sons, Colin, Gavin, and Manny. Diaz, who worked at ESPN from 1995 to 1997, was a Miami Herald Honorable Mention All-Dade County Scholar-Athlete for football, basketball, and baseball in 1991.

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