

# Introducing Blue Raider Zane Gibson

**GoBlueRaiders.com will sit down with each men's basketball player leading up to the first official team practice on Oct. 15**

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This is the seventh installment of a series highlighting the 2010-11 Middle Tennessee basketball team as they begin preparation to defend their Sun Belt Conference title.

In this edition, GoBlueRaiders.com sat down with guard Zane Gibson, who took a redshirt last season as a freshman.

**Q: You took a redshirt last season as freshman. What were you able to work on in practice last season that most improved your game?**

A: In high school you occasionally come across someone who is a really good player, but when I was on the scout team, I got matched up with Montarrio (Haddock) and

Calvin (O'Neil) who were bigger, stronger and faster than I was, and I had to play against them every day. I was the other team's main shooter guard in practice. I got to be Brandon Hazzard from Troy and AJ Slaughter from Western. JJ (Jason Jones) and Jimmy (Oden) would be the drivers.

**Q: What have you been working on in the off-season to improve your game?**

A: The main thing is to continue to become a better athlete so I can guard someone better because that is what gets you on the floor. Also, improving my handles and making better decisions. I'm just trying to be a real solid player that can knock down a jump shot. Coach Spray has also really been working with us on conditioning.

**Q: You had excellent grades at Baylor School in Chattanooga, and could have gone anywhere you wanted to in that regard. Why did you choose Middle Tennessee?**

A: I did have some Ivy League-type schools and military schools that wanted me, but when I came up here to meet with Coach Davis, it was how he held himself and presented the program that got me interested. The facilities here are a lot better than most of the other schools that wanted me. I



just felt like it was the right place for me.

**Q: The team was very close last season, both on and off the court. Is there anything that you or the team will be doing to help continue that closeness with the new players coming in?**

A: Mixing them in with us living-wise, new players with old players, is one thing we have done. We have gone out to eat together several times. We try to get together and do a team thing every once in awhile. We are always around each other, three or four or five of us, but every once in a while we want to make sure that all of us get together as a team so we can keep that closeness. That really helped us last year. When you come to a Division I program, it's the highest level you can play at in college, its cut-throat, and everybody is trying to win, everybody is trying to get better, but it makes it easier when people encourage you in a positive way. They really had our backs all the time, and that helped. Everybody wants everybody to get better.

**Q: What is your favorite thing about Murfreesboro?**

A: Probably the people. I don't know if I have ever met a nicer group of people just when you are out and about, going over to the mall area, or after a game. They don't even have to know that you are a basketball player from Middle Tennessee, they are nice to everyone. I think that the people of Murfreesboro really embrace the school, and support us in any number of ways.

**Q: What are you looking most forward to about this season?**

A: The chance to go out and win another championship. We shared the regular season championship and made it to the postseason for the first time in a while, but we want to get to the Big Dance, and we all have to work as hard as we possibly can to get there.

**Q: Who is your favorite professional athlete, and why?**

A: Its either Peyton Manning or Steve Nash. Being from Tennessee, Peyton was the first real big college superstar that I watched play growing up. I never cared anything about the Colts when he went up there, but I've been watching him ever since. And I just love how Steve Nash plays the game of basketball. I think he plays it the right way.

**Q: What is one thing that Middle Tennessee fans don't know about you that they would find interesting?**

A: In high school, my friends used to call me "The Rain" like rain drops, or raining three's. We were playing our big rival my freshman year, and I broke out and hit like six or seven threes. The next game, there was a kid that had a sign that said, 'Zane, the Rain', and it started from there. In my senior year, there was a group that would wear ponchos to all the games. I had nothing to do with starting it, but it was good fun, kids having a good time.

**Q: What was your reaction when James Washington made ten three's in one game to set a new school record?**

A: I really credit him for helping me last year. He's always in the gym, and he'll call me whenever he goes because he knows I'll go, and we always work on three's, so I was really happy for him. He's got it in him. He could do it every night if he wanted to.

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