

Blue Raiders "at home" on the road in Sun Belt action

Program has won 38 Sun Belt road games under Davis

January 14, 2011 · MT Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

During the eight-plus seasons that head coach Kermit Davis has been at the helm of the Middle Tennessee basketball program, his teams have recorded the most road wins of any team in the league.

Davis and his squad hope that the trend continues as they play on the road at Arkansas State on Saturday night. Tipoff will be at 7:05 p.m., and the game can be heard on the Blue Raider network with Chip Walters doing the play-by-play and Kyle Turnham serving as color analyst. After losing to Eastern Division-leading Florida Atlantic, 71-61, on Thursday night, the Blue Raiders will take a 2-2 mark to Arkansas State. Victory in Jonesboro would give the



team their second Sun Belt road win of the season, but for Davis, it would be his 39th win on a conference opponent's floor since he came here in the 2002-03 season. That tops all Sun Belt teams during that span. Perennial league power Western Kentucky, who lost Thursday night at Troy, trails with 36 road wins. Middle Tennessee's conference championship last year can be attributed in large part to a 7-2 record on the road to compliment a 6-3 record in Murphy Center. How does Davis explain his success in an area that is normally very hard to be successful in? "We have had success on the road in conference play. I think it is a tribute to scouting and to our toughness, and so hopefully we can carry that over on Saturday night." said Davis. "But Arkansas State is unbeaten at home this year, and we lost on a last-second shot there last year." Middle Tennessee, under Davis, is 4-2 at Arkansas State, losing 69-67 last year, and dropping a 75-74 heartbreaker at ASU in 2006. Overall, Davis' Middle Tennessee teams have an excellent 10-3 record against the Red Wolves. Point guard James Washington, who was a big part of the Blue Raiders' 7-2 record in the Sun Belt road games last year, believes that the more laid-back atmosphere on the road helps the team relax and play better. "I don't think there is any great secret to it. Coach Davis has had a high percentage

in wins on the road since he's been here," said Washington. "I think we get mentally prepared better because we get away from campus and we are not with our friends and students. "We get prepared better, we have a good practice before we drive down the road, and all of that plays a part of it. We are just better mentally prepared to play the ball game when we are on the road." Sophomore Jason Jones, who sat out last season after transferring from UTEP, is second on the team in scoring with 12.9 ppg, trailing only Washington's 14.2 average. Jones, at only 6-6, 195, leads the team in rebounding with 4.7 caroms per game. Among the most significant of Davis' 39 road wins was last year's 84-74 win over rival Western Kentucky in Bowling Green that was the difference in the Blue Raiders winning a piece of the conference title, or finishing behind the Hilltoppers. Among other top victories were wins at South Alabama in '07, '08 and '09, and at Troy in '07 and '08. Middle Tennessee's next home game will be on Thursday night when Troy comes to town, and then the Blue Raiders will entertain Denver on the 22nd in the annual "Legends Reunion" game. Both games start at 7 pm.

Printed on July 24, 2014

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/50490>