

Notes from Today's MT-ASU Game

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CO-CHAMPIONS - AT

LEAST: The Blue Raiders assured themselves of no worse than a co-championship in the Sun Belt Conference today with the victory over Arkansas State. Middle Tennessee completed its first SBC season with a 6-1 record, including a perfect 3-0 mark at home. The 2001 championship marks the first by the Blue Raiders since 1994 when they won the Ohio Valley Conference as a member of I-AA. The Blue Raiders achieved their title in just their 31st game as a I-A member. **NEWSON TIES**

OWENBY: Wide receiver Kendall Newson tied the

Middle Tennessee career touchdown receptions record today when he hauled in a 29-yard TD grab in the fourth quarter from backup quarterback Jason Johnson. Newson's 21 career touchdown receptions matches the mark set by Herbert Owenby from 1964-67. **LEE HAS BIG DAY:** For the second time this season, sophomore running back Reshard Lee topped the 100-yard mark. Lee, sharing rushing duties with Dwone Hicks, had 23 carries for a career-high 146 yards and one touchdown. In the second half, Lee had 14 carries for 100 yards. **SCORING MACHINES:** With 54 points today, the Blue Raiders are now averaging 54.3 (217) points a game at home this year. In fact, the Blue Raiders have scored 40 or more points at home seven times in the last nine games. Under Andy McCollum, the Blue Raiders are averaging 43.9 points a game at home in 14 contests. **FIRST PICK:** Junior Randy Arnold collected his first career interception today when he picked off ASU quarterback Tommy Miller in the first quarter. It marked the 10th interception by the Blue Raiders this season and 11 is the most ever under Andy McCollum. **HE'S BACK:** Junior Dwone Hicks played healthy for the first time in three weeks today against Arkansas State and it clearly showed. Hicks had 15 carries for 72 yards and two touchdowns. Hicks scored a total of 20 points on two rushing TD's, one touchdown reception and a two-point conversion. With 20 points today, Hicks surpassed Kelly Potter for third place on the all-time scoring list. Hicks now has 262 career points and needs just 19 more points to overtake Garth Petrilli as the school's all-time leader. **KELLY PASSES MARTIN:** With eight points today sophomore Brian Kelly surpassed Archie Arrington (1970, 72-74) for fifth place on Middle Tennessee's Points Scored by Kicking list. Kelly now has 124 career points. **ANOTHER BLOCK:** For the third time under Andy McCollum, the Blue Raiders

blocked a kick when Chris Johnson deflected an Arkansas State punt in the first quarter. Under McCollum, Middle Tennessee has blocked two punts (Michael Woods vs Louisiana Tech in 2000, Johnson today vs ASU) and an extra point (Kareem Bland vs UL-Monroe in 2001). **MAC ATTACK SHINES IN NOVEMBER:** The mark of a good team is usually how well it finishes games and a season. Under head coach Andy McCollum, the Blue Raiders are now 6-1 in the championship month of November and have won five straight. The only loss in November came on Nov. 13, 1999 at home against UCF. **STREAK AT 41:** Senior Kendall Newson extended his streak to 41 consecutive games with at least one reception. That streak, which is also a school record, is the third longest in the country. **HICKS MOVES UP TD CHART:** With three total touchdowns today against ASU, Dwone Hicks tied Kippy Bayless for second place on Middle Tennessee's all-time touchdowns scored list. Hicks now has 43 total touchdowns and needs only two more to tie Joe Campbell for the all-time record. In rushing touchdowns, Hicks ran his total to 38 on his career to tie Kippy Bayless for second place on that list. **HOME STREAK REACHES 10:** Middle Tennessee extended its home winning streak to 10 straight games with today's win over Arkansas State. The last time MT lost at home was Nov. 13, 1999 against Central Florida. **QUICK HITTERS:** The Blue Raiders are now 42-18-2 on Homecoming and have won 13 of the last 14 (2-1 under McCollum) - MT is now 12-2 all-time at home under Andy McCollum - Blue Raiders are now 6-1 in the month of November under McCollum and have won five in a row - DB Rod Higgins and LB Chris Hough made their first collegiate starts today - For the second straight game, the Blue Raiders successfully converted a two-point conversion when Dwone Hicks ran one in during the first quarter and later made another one when David Youell hit Avery Hatten in the third quarter - Dwone Hicks now has at least one rushing touchdown in 10 of his last 13 outings - Brian Kelly's 47-yard field goal today was the longest of his career - Nick Payne hauled in a personal best two receptions today to give him three on the season and five for his career - Former Blue Raider great and 14-year NFL veteran Dwight Stone was in the pressbox today visiting old friends and cheering on MT - Tyrone Calico's 38-yard touchdown run in the third quarter was the first rushing score of his career - Andy McCollum improved his coaching record to 16-15 - Rondell Newson played in his first collegiate game today at wide receiver - Jason Johnson rushed for a career-high 45 yards on seven carries.

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