

# Late score caps Blue Raider thrilling comeback for Homecoming win

## MT scores with 11 seconds left for victory over Memphis

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### MURFREESBORO, Tenn. –

Redshirt sophomore quarterback Logan Kilgore hit a wide-open Anthony Amos, a redshirt junior, with 11 seconds left in regulation to secure a Middle Tennessee come-from-behind victory over Memphis Saturday, 38-31, on Homecoming in front of 20,098 at Floyd Stadium in Murfreesboro, Tenn. MT fans can watch a replay of the game at 7 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday on MTTV (Channel 10 in Murfreesboro). The Tigers had tied the game at 31 apiece with just under two minutes remaining before the Blue Raiders drove the length of the field, 94 yards on seven plays, for the winning score. The first three plays were D.D. Kyles runs before Kilgore's arm took control. He hit Kyles on his first pass, a 17-yard gain, and then found Malcolm Beyah for a 23-yarder to put Middle Tennessee (1-3) into Tiger territory at the 33-yard



line. After spiking the ball to stop the clock, the Blue Raider signal caller found Amos at the right hashmark and he darted across the goal line untouched for the 33-yard winning score. Kilgore finished 27-of-41 for 277 yards and three touchdowns. Kyles finished as the game's leader on the ground, netting 105 yards on 15 carries, as MT reached the 200-yard rushing plateau. Beyah hauled in a team-best six receptions for 82 yards and a pair of scores, while Benny Cunningham, Reggie Whatley and Tavarres Jefferson each registered three catches. Craig Allen led the Blue Raider defense with 10 tackles, all solo stops, while Arness Ikner and Eric Russell each posted seven tackles to aid the cause. Memphis quarterback Taylor Reed ended the game 25-of-32 for 230 yards

and a touchdown. His primary target was Tanner Rehrer with 10 grabs for 72 yards, while Kevin Wright finished with 48 yards on six catches. Billy Foster added 94 yards rushing on 23 carries, nearly double the 52 put up by teammate Artaves Gibson. Bobby McCain and Mitch Huelsing topped the Tiger defensive corps with eight tackles each, including seven solo stops. Memphis' Lavaris Edwards fumbled the opening kickoff but Kendrick Golden fell on the loose ball to retain possession. Then, on the game's first play, Foster rattled off a 27-yard rush up the middle to cross midfield. After nine plays in all, Foster capped the drive with a seven-yard carry to give the Tigers a 7-0 lead at the 10:44 mark. Memphis kept the possession alive with a first-down Reed pass to Wright to the 15 before a personal foul penalty against the Blue Raider defense moved the ball inside the 10-yard line. Middle Tennessee started its second drive on its own 34 after a Tiger punt. William Pratcher darted 17 yards on the second play before Akeem Davis intercepted a Kilgore pass at the Memphis 49. The defensive back returned the pick 33 yards to the Blue Raider 18, setting up a short field for the visitors. Fortunately for MT, its defense stepped up to the challenge, pushing UM back a yard on four plays, and the Tigers settled for a 36-yard field goal by Paulo Henriques with 3:52 left in the first quarter for a 10-0 advantage. As the second quarter began, Memphis held possession. Reed located Keiwone Malone for an 18-yard grab on the first play of the new 15 minutes. Gibson then went right for a 28-yard rush. Not wasting any time, Reed connected with Reggie Travis for 14 yards before keeping the ball himself on the next play, a seven-yard scamper. He outstretched the ball across the plane, and after a review, it was upheld to extend the Tiger margin to 17-0 with 13:38 remaining in the half. Finally, just over four minutes later, the Blue Raiders punched points into the scoring column with a five-yard Kilgore strike to Beyah at 9:34. Middle Tennessee consumed 4:04 off clock on a dozen plays to cover 58 yards before the pair connected to pull MT within 10, 17-7. Kyles had the drive's longest play, an eight run, but the possession got an assist on a 13-yard pass interference call against the Memphis defense to place it inside the 10-yard line. The momentum continued to be on the Blue Raider side, as the ensuing kickoff skipped past Edwards before he retreated to fall on the loose ball at the Tiger 7-yard line. Facing the long field, Memphis (1-4) mounted just a yard on its three plays before punting the ball back to Middle Tennessee. The Blue Raiders were unable to capitalize on the opportunity, giving the Tigers the ball back on a Nathaniel Toulson punt, but the kick rolled dead and was downed at the 1-yard line after a 39-yard boot. Memphis managed just nine yards on the next possession before punting the ball away again. Russell grabbed the kick and raced 17 yards for a short-field setup for Middle Tennessee, starting at the Memphis 30. Again, the Blue Raiders were able to use it to their advantage, as Huelsing sacked Kilgore on third down to push MT out of field goal range. Just when it seemed the Blue Raiders may not have another chance before half, Russell stripped Gibson and then pounced on the loose ball to give Middle Tennessee the ball back at the 5-yard line. After three-straight D.D. Kyles running plays fell short, Alan Gendreau came on and converted a 21-yard field goal at 1:39 to make it a one-score game, 17-10. It would be the final score of the half. Neither team was able to score on their first possessions of the second half, but that changed with the second Blue Raider drive. Getting the ball at their own 41 with 6:33 left in the period, Middle Tennessee needed only seven plays to tie the contest at 17-17. After the first two plays went just three yards, Kilgore placed the ball in Tyler Mason's hands for a gain of 17 yards. Another couple offensive plays sputtered before Kilgore and Kyles combined for a pass for a dozen yards, moving MT to the Memphis 36-yard line. Facing a fourth-and-seven, Beyah raced down the visitor sideline and jumped over a pair of defenders to haul in Kilgore's attempt at the front pylon to knot the scoring with 3:16 left in the third quarter. Memphis then went back in front, 24-17, on its first drive of the fourth quarter. Facing 71 yards to pay dirt, the Tigers secured five first downs, including four through the air, as Reed went 4-of-4 for 49 yards before Foster completed the possession with four-straight rushes, including the scoring carry from

two yards away at 7:53. It did not take long for the Blue Raiders to counter, needing only two plays, both rushes from Kyles. His first carry went for seven yards before he took the next handoff 59 yards and sprinted untouched along the home sideline to pull his team even once again, 24-24, with 7:19 to play. Middle Tennessee then set up its next score on the following drive, despite a pair of fumbles. The first dropped ball, by Sancho McDonald, went out of bounds and did not cost MT possession. The Blue Raiders crossed the midfield stripe on a 15-yard catch by Jared Bamber and then went another 15 yards on a Pratcher run. Pratcher's second-straight carry led Middle Tennessee down to the 10-yard line before Davis punched the ball loose. The ball went forward, into the end zone, and after a scrum, Beyah was on the bottom of the pile, giving the Blue Raiders a 31-24 lead with 3:14 remaining. The officials reviewed the play and determined to uphold the score. Memphis did not quit, however, and would cover 79 yards on just five plays in just 1:33 to force the third tie, 31-31, with 1:41 left. Reed again was instrumental in the drive, finishing 5-of-5, and hitting Malone for a 23-yard touchdown strike. Middle Tennessee returns to action in just five days, playing host to Western Kentucky at 6:30 p.m. Thursday in a nationally-televised contest on ESPNU. **Middle Tennessee**

#### **Postgame Notes:**

**KILGORE TOPS 1,000:** Sophomore quarterback Logan Kilgore went over the 1,000-yard passing mark for the season after just four games following a 277-yard effort against Memphis. Kilgore becomes fifth signal-caller at MT to reach 1,000 yards through first four games of a season since the Blue Raiders joined the FBS ranks in 1999. The other four were Wes Counts in 1999 (1,068 yards), Clint Marks in 2004 (1,072 yards), Joe Craddock in 2008 (1,076 yards), and Dwight Dasher in 2009 (1,028 yards).

**STOCK MOVES UP WINS LIST:** With tonight's win, head coach Rick Stockstill moved into a fourth-place tie with Andy McCollum for coaching victories at Middle Tennessee with 34. Stockstill was previously tied for fifth with Frank Faulkinberry and needs just one more to tie Alfred Miles for third on the all-time list.

**GENDREAU TIES KELLY:** PK Alan Gendreau's second quarter field goal was the 40th of his career and his second of the season. The 40 three-pointers ties Gendreau with Brian Kelly for second place on the Blue Raiders' all-time field goals made list. Gendreau now needs two more field goals to tie Nick Bazaldua (North Texas) and Sean Comisky (ULL) for third place on the Sun Belt's career list.

**BEYAH CRACKS TOP 10:** With two touchdown receptions against Memphis, senior wide receiver Malcolm Beyah cracked the top at MT in career TD catches. Beyah now has 12 and ties Cory Simpson for 10th place. Beyah, who owns four for the season, needs one more to tie Mike Pittman and Vince Parks for eighth place.

**CAREER DAY FOR PRATCHER:** Running back William Pratcher earned extra carries against Memphis when starter Benny Cunningham was lost in the second quarter with a foot injury. Pratcher set personal bests with nine carries for 80 yards. He also notched his career long run with a 17 yarder.

**HOMECOMING WIN No. 50 in YEAR 100:** Middle Tennessee's victory was its 50th all-time in Homecoming games and came during the 100th Anniversary of the University. The win improves the Blue Raiders all-time mark in Homecoming contests to 50-20-2 and 5-1 under Rick Stockstill.

**LAST MINUTE RAIDERS:** Middle Tennessee captured its fourth victory under Rick Stockstill when

scoring in the final minute of regulation. The Blue Raiders' touchdown with 11 seconds remaining was its first under 60 seconds since Alan Gendreau nailed a 19-yard field goal as time expired at Maryland in 2009. Other last-minute wins came against ULM in 2007 and then versus FAU in 2008 on a hail mary pass.

**IN-STATE RECORD IMPROVES:** The Blue Raiders moved their record to 10-2 against in-state opponents with tonight's triumph, including a 5-1 mark under head coach Rick Stockstill. Three of the wins were on the road against Vanderbilt and three others have now come against Memphis.

**QUICK HITTERS:** D.D. Kyles' 59-yard TD run in the fourth quarter was the longest run from scrimmage for the Blue Raiders this season ... LB Christian Henry made his first collegiate start tonight against Memphis ... MT won the opening coin toss for the second time this season and both were at home ... Game captains tonight were Colin Boss, Arness Ikner, and Zeke Anderson ... Linebackers Corey Carmichael and Jonathan Brooks did not dress tonight due to violation of athletic department policies ... OT Mike Williams made his 40th career start tonight ... The Blue Raiders improved to 24-2 under Stockstill when scoring 30 or more points.

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