

Top-seeded Blue Raiders primed for Sun Belt Championship

MT will begin quest for first title Sunday at 6 p.m.

March 4, 2012 · Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

The top-seeded Middle Tennessee men's basketball team begins the quest for its first Sun Belt tournament title on Sunday at Summit Arena in Hot Springs, Ark. The Blue Raiders will face No. 9 seed Arkansas State at 6 p.m. CT. The quarterfinal matchup will air on CSS with Joe Davis and Dave Odom on the call, in addition to ESPN Full Court and ESPN3. **GAME**

INFORMATION

Date: Sunday, March 4

Time: 6:00 p.m. CT

Location: Hot Springs, Ark.

Facility: Summit Arena

MEDIA INFORMATION

TV: Sun Belt Network/CSS

Play-by-play: Joe Davis

Analysis: Dave Odom

Radio: WGNS (1450 AM, 101.9 FM, 100.5 FM)/WNSR (560 AM)/WMOT (89.5 FM)

Play-by-Play: Chip Walters

Analysis: Kyle Turnham



Live Video (ESPN3): Available [here](#)

Live Audio: Available [here](#)

Live Stats: Available [here](#)

Full Championship Viewing Guide: Available [here](#)

TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

--The tournament is being held in Hot Springs for the fourth consecutive year.

--MT has earned the No. 1 seed for the first time since joining the Sun Belt in the 2000-01 season. The last time MT was the No. 1 seed for a conference tournament was in 1989 as a member of the OVC.

--MT earned the No. 1 seed four times as a member of the OVC and won the tournament twice from the top slot (1975, 1989).

--MT has won five conference tournaments, all coming as a member of the OVC (1975, 1977, 1982, 1985, 1989).

--The No. 1 seed has won the Sun Belt tournament 15 times and played in the championship game 23 times. The last time the No. 1 seed won the tournament was WKU in 2009. In the 11 years MT has been a member of the Sun Belt, the No. 1 seed has won the tournament five times.

--MT has played in the Sun Belt championship game twice (2003, 2008).

--MT has advanced to at least the semifinal round five times since joining the Sun Belt.

--MT is 12-11 all-time in the tournament. The 12 wins rank sixth among current members.

--MT's women's team also earned the No. 1 seed for the tournament, marking the first time since WKU in 2003 one school has earned both top seeds. Dating back to 1983, Louisiana Tech in 1999 is the only other school to accomplish the feat.

BLUE RAIDER FASTBREAK POINTS

--LaRon Dendy was named the 2012 Sun Belt Player of the Year and Kermit Davis earned the league's Coach of the Year honor. It is the first time MT has received the Sun Belt's top player award, while the top coaching accolade is the second for Davis.

--Marcos Knight was named second-team all-conference and JT Sulton earned third-team honors. With MT's 71-66 win over FIU on Dec. 29, head coach Kermit --Davis surpassed Jimmy Earle as MT's all-time winningest coach. It marked Davis' 165th MT victory, eclipsing Earle's mark of 164.

--MT's 20-2 start was the best in program history, topping the previous mark of 18-2 in the 1974-75 season.

--MT's 10-0 league start was the best in program history. It topped the previous mark of 9-0 set in the 1974-75 season when the Blue Raiders were a member of the OVC.

--MT's 12-game winning streak from Dec. 10 through Jan. 26 was the longest in 26 years and is tied for the third-longest in school history.

--MT has won 18 games by a double-figure margin, including 10 of the last 16 contests.

--As of the NCAA statistics on Feb. 26, MT ranks third in the nation in field goal percentage (49.8). MT also ranks 11th in win-loss percentage (83.3). The Blue Raiders ranked in the top three in field goal percentage for six consecutive weeks to open the season and have remained in the top 20 throughout the year.

--As of Feb. 27, MT is one of only seven teams in the nation with at least 25 wins and 10 road wins. The Blue Raiders' 25 victories are tied for the sixth-most in the nation.

--MT's 10 road wins this season are the most in school history and tied for the ninth-most in the country as of Feb. 27. The Blue Raiders also lead the Sun Belt with 46 league road victories in the past 10 years.

--MT set a school-record with a 71.4 shooting percentage at UCLA on Nov. 15. The Blue Raiders shot 70.8 percent in the first half and 72 percent in the second half of the contest.

ALL ABOUT MT (25-5, 14-2 SBC)

Blue Raiders Rake in Awards

Middle Tennessee head coach Kermit Davis has been named the Sun Belt Coach of the Year and senior forward LaRon Dendy took home the Sun Belt Player of the Year honor, as announced on

Wednesday by the conference office. In addition to Dendy also earning first-team accolades, Marcos Knight was named to the all-conference second team and JT Sulton took home third-team honors. MT's three All-Sun Belt selections are the most since joining the league for the 2000-01 season. The last time at least three Blue Raiders were named to all-conference teams was in 1989 when MT had two on the All-OVC First Team and one on the second team.

It also marks the first time a Blue Raider has earned the Sun Belt's top player award, while Davis earns the league's top coaching honor for the second time in his tenure, having also received the accolade in 2003. Davis and Dendy become the first duo from the same school to take home coach and player of the year honors since Denver's Terry Carroll and Yemi Nicholson did so in 2005.

Dendy Makes Blue Raider History

Dendy becomes MT's first conference player of the year since Jerry Beck earned Ohio Valley Conference Player of the Year honors in 1981 and 1982. He is the fourth Blue Raider to earn a league's player of the year award, joining Tim Sisneros (1976) and George Sorrell (1975), in addition to Beck. He is also the fourth Blue Raider to earn All-Sun Belt First Team honors, along with Lee Nosse, Tommy Gunn and Desmond Yates.

Vote For Dendy

LaRon Dendy has been named as one of the 25 finalists for the Lou Henson Player of the Year Award, given to the nation's top mid-major player. Fans can vote for Dendy by visiting VoteLouHenson.com beginning Feb. 18 and running through March 12. The fan vote will count for one-third of the final decision.

Sun Belt Champions

With the win over Florida Atlantic on Feb. 18, MT clinched the Sun Belt's regular-season title and the No. 1 seed for the conference tournament. It marks the program's first No. 1 seed as a member of the Sun Belt. Additionally, MT's victory over ULM clinched the league's best record this season. The Blue Raiders have now finished atop the Sun Belt standings in two of the past three seasons, tying Troy and North Texas with a 13-5 record in 2009-10.

Dendy is Dandy

After sitting out last season due to NCAA transfer rules, LaRon Dendy has made an impact in his lone season for the Blue Raiders. He netted 21 points in the season-opener against Austin Peay and was one rebound shy of a double-double, collecting nine boards. He notched his first double-double of the season at UCLA, collecting 16 points and 13 rebounds, then added his second double-double with 19 points and 11 rebounds against Akron. In the Sun Belt opener against FIU, Dendy posted his third double-double of the season with 11 points and 10 rebounds, then added his fourth with 21 points and 11 rebounds against South Alabama (12/31). Dendy added his sixth performance of 20 or more points with 22 points at Vanderbilt (1/28), then posted his fifth double-double with career-highs in both points (26) and rebounds (14) against WKU on Feb. 9. He followed that up with a 23-point showing against UALR and made it three straight games of 20-or-more points with 20 against FAU. He added 10 rebounds in the contest for his sixth double-double of the season and second in three games. He now has nine games of at least 20 points. He has also shown versatility on the court, ranking first on the team in scoring (14.8 ppg) rebounding (7.0 rpg) and blocks (47) and third on the team with 63 assists.

More on Dendy's Dominance

Prior to his Sun Belt Player of the Year honor, senior forward LaRon Dendy was named the Sun Belt

Player of the Week on Jan. 30 then again on Feb. 13. Dendy picked up his first career weekly honor and the second of the season for the Blue Raiders after averaging 19.5 points, 5.5 rebounds and 2.0 assists in two games during the week of Jan. 23. Dendy put together back-to-back double-digit scoring performances, including a career-high 22 points against Vanderbilt on Jan. 28. Over the two games, he shot an impressive 70 percent from the field while hitting 10-of-13 from the line. He also scored 17 against Troy on Jan. 26. He earned his second weekly accolade after averaging 24.5 points, 10.0 rebounds and 3.0 assists in wins over WKU and UALR. Dendy had a career day against rival WKU, posting his fifth double-double of the season with 26 points and 14 rebounds, both career-highs. He matched his career-high with four assists in the contest as well. The Greenville, S.C., native followed that up with his eighth game of 20-or-more points this season, scoring 23 as MT clinched the Sun Belt East Division title with a 68-60 victory over West champion UALR. Not only did Dendy score 19 points in the first half of the contest, but he also scored 12 in a row for the Blue Raiders to start the game. He finished the contest shooting nearly 82 percent from the field. Dendy joined Marcos Knight as the Blue Raiders who received weekly honors this season. Dendy became the first Blue Raider to receive multiple weekly honors in the same season and the third to earn multiple accolades in their career. He is the fifth Blue Raider overall to receive the league's weekly award. It marked the eighth weekly accolade in program history and the first time since the 2001-02 season MT had multiple player of the week awards.

Amazing Assists

MT has been one of the best assisting teams in the nation this season, and the Blue Raiders demonstrated that on Thursday with a season-high 30 assists on 35 field goals against ULM. It marked the most assists in a game for a Blue Raider squad since MT tallied 32 against Trevecca on Nov. 14, 2008. The mark was also just two assists shy of the Sun Belt's record between two league teams, set by Louisiana against UTPA on Jan. 17, 1998.

Records Abound

With 25 wins this season, the Blue Raiders set a new single-season school record. MT has had 23 wins four times, with the most recent coming in the 1988-89 season. The Blue Raiders also cracked the 20-win mark for the first time since the 1990-91 season when they went 21-9. The last time MT cracked the 20-win mark during the regular season was the 1988-89 season when the Blue Raiders were 23-8, including three postseason victories. MT also set the record for most league wins in a season with 14. The Blue Raiders' previous record was 13 Sun Belt wins in 2009-10. MT's 37 league wins over the past three seasons are the most of any Sun Belt team.

Among the Nation's Elite

MT is keeping elite company having reached the 25-win plateau this season. The 25 victories are tied for the sixth-most wins in the nation (as of Feb. 27) behind Syracuse (29), Kentucky (28), Murray State (28), Oral Roberts (26) and Wichita State (26). VCU, Creighton, Saint Mary's, Drexel, Duke, North Carolina and Missouri also have 25 wins. Additionally, the Blue Raiders are one of only seven teams with at least 25 wins and 10 road wins, along with Murray State, Creighton, Wichita State, Drexel, Oral Roberts and VCU.

An impressive stretch

Prior to the loss at Vanderbilt, MT had won 16 of 17, marking the best 17-game stretch in program history. During the span, MT won 10 games by double-figures and have collected 18 double-digit wins overall.

Nation Taking Notice

The Blue Raiders are currently receiving votes in the ESPN/USA Today Coaches poll. In the latest Coaches poll released on Feb. 27, MT received eight votes, putting the Blue Raiders at 31st nationally. It marks the 10th-straight week MT has received votes in the Coaches poll. The Blue Raiders received votes in the AP Top 25 earlier twice this season. MT garnered nine votes on Jan. 23 and also received two votes for the Nov. 21 edition of the AP poll. It marks the first time in program history the Blue Raiders have received votes in either poll. The Blue Raiders are also ranked No. 8 in the current CollegelInsider.com Mid-Major Top 25. In addition, MT currently sits 47th in the Sagarin ratings, the highest rating of any Sun Belt team. The Blue Raiders also rank 47th in the NCAA RPI, best of any league team, and have a non-conference RPI of 33.

Starting It Off Right

The Blue Raiders got off to a 4-0 start this season, marking the first 4-0 start since the 1994-95 season. It also marked the first time in program history MT defeated three Division I opponents to open the season. MT's 20-2 start marked the best in school history. It topped the previous mark of 18-2 in 1974-75. Additionally, MT's 13 wins before the new year are the most in school history, surpassing the previous mark of nine in 1991. **And For League Starters**

MT's 10-0 Sun Belt start was the best conference mark in program history. The Blue Raiders broke the record of 9-0 set in the 1974-75 season as a member of the Ohio Valley Conference. **Gender Wars**

Both the Blue Raider men's and women's basketball programs got off to 10-0 starts in the Sun Belt. It marked the second time in the last four years both teams have started league play 5-0 or better (2008-09). WKU is the only other Sun Belt school to have both programs start at least 5-0, which occurred in 1992-93. No Sun Belt program has had both teams earn 10-0 starts. With a combined record of 49-10, the MT programs are tied for fourth nationally in wins and rank fifth in winning percentage.

Best of Both Worlds

In addition to Davis, Blue Raider women's head coach Rick Insell also was named the Sun Belt Coach of the Year. It marks just the fourth time in history that head coaches for both the men's and women's basketball programs from the same school have earned top coaching honors in the same year. Davis and Insell become the first duo since the 1999 combination of Louisiana Tech's Keith Richard (men) and Leon Barmore (women) to capture both coach of the year honors. WKU's Clem Haskins (M)/Paul Sanderford (W) in 1986 and UAB's Gene Bartow (M)/Bill Ivey (W) in 1985 also accomplished the feat. **Streiking Raiders**

The Blue Raiders 12-game winning streak spanning from Dec. 10 through Jan. 26 was the longest since MT won a school-record 14 straight during the 1985-86 season. It ties the third-longest streak in school history, matching the 12-game mark during the 1980-81 season, and marks only the fourth time history MT has won at least 12 straight games. **One-Two Punch**

Bruce Massey and Marcos Knight are a dual threat when it comes to ball-handling. The duo ranks No. 1 and No. 4, respectively, in assist-to-turnover ratio in league games. Massey holds a 2.3 ratio, while Knight is at 1.6. Massey also ranks first overall in the league with a 2.2 ratio. Additionally, Massey holds a just over a 1.0 ratio in steals (48) and blocks (6) to turnovers (52), a stat that ranks among the nation's elite point guards.

Road Warriors

MT is currently 10-4 on the road after starting the season 4-0 in away contests, marking the first time since 1967-68 the Blue Raiders won four straight road games to start the season. The last time the

Blue Raiders won at least four consecutive road games in a season was 2006-07 when MT reeled off five in a row during Sun Belt play. The Blue Raiders' 10 road victories this season are tied for the ninth-most nationally and are the most in program history. MT has won nine road games three times in history, with the most recent coming in the 1997-98 season. And with six of road victories coming in league games this season, MT has collected 46 league road victories in the past 10 years, the most of any Sun Belt school.

Offense vs. Defense

The Blue Raider offense got off to a hot start during non-conference play, but its the defense that has dominated in MT's 14 Sun Belt victories. In non-conference action, the Blue Raiders averaged 76.1 points per game, held opponents to 64.1 points per game, and shot 52.9 percent from the field, including a 41.2 percent from beyond the arc. Compare that to MT's 68.9 points per game, 47.2 percent shooting and 32.0 percent 3-point shooting in conference play. Despite cooling off offensively in league games, the Blue Raiders are holding opponents to 59.1 points per game, best in the conference, and have outscored their league foes by an average of 9.8 points per game. In fact, 11 of 16 conference foes scored 61 points or less.

Davis becomes all-time winningest coach

Head coach Kermit Davis became Middle Tennessee's all-time winningest coach in the Blue Raiders' 71-66 win over FIU on Dec. 29. It marked Davis' 165th victory at the helm of the Blue Raiders, surpassing former coach Jimmy Earle, who held the record with 164 wins. This season, Davis joins Earle, who spent a decade guiding the Blue Raiders, as the longest tenured coaches in program history.

Unselfish Play

MT has been one of the top assisting teams in Sun Belt this season, currently ranking second in the league with 15.6 assists per game. The Blue Raiders have 467 assists on 779 field goals, marking the most assists of any team during head coach Kermit Davis' tenure. The total is the most since MT had 484 in the 1999-2000 season.

Home Sweet Home

MT finished the season on a 13-game winning streak at Murphy Center. The streak is the longest since MT won 14 in a row spanning the 1996-97 and 1997-98 seasons. It is the fifth-longest mark in history. With 14 wins at home this season, the Blue Raiders have collected double-digit home victories in each of the past five seasons and in eight out of 10 years during Davis' tenure. The 14 home wins are also tied for the most during the regular-season in program history. MT won 14 regular-season home games in 1973-74 and twice won 15 home games (1978-88, 1975-75), but each of those seasons included two postseason home victories. Additionally, this season marks the first since 1996-97 that the Blue Raiders suffered only one loss at home. MT finished 13-1 at home during the 1996-97 campaign. MT has finished undefeated at home four times in program history. MT's 8-0 home record in conference play is the best since the Blue Raiders finished 6-0 in 1988-89 as a member of the OVC. It marks the sixth time in program history MT has finished undefeated at home in conference play, but the first time during the Sun Belt era.

Cracking 300

MT head coach Kermit Davis earned his 300th career victory in the Blue Raiders' 65-62 win over Belmont on Dec. 13. Davis, in his 10th season at the helm of the Blue Raiders, holds a 249-181 record as a Division I head coach and was 66-25 as a junior college head coach.

Triple Threat

It's no surprise MT's offense is not only one of the best in the Sun Belt, but also in the nation. Three of the top 10 shooters in the league are Blue Raiders. JT Sulton (.542) is fifth, LaRon Dendy (.536) is sixth and Marcos Knight (.487) is 10th. That kind of shooting has helped MT to shoot 50 percent or better in 14 contests, including five performances of better than 60 percent.

It's Not Just Offense

While the Blue Raider offense has been hot, the defense is no slouch either. MT leads the Sun Belt in field goal percentage defense (.391) and 3-point defense (.311), holding 27 of its 30 opponents under 50 percent shooting. In fact, 18 of 30 opponents have shot 40 percent or worse against the Blue Raiders, with South Alabama's .263 percentage marking a season-low for MT opponents.

Statistically Sound

MT has remained one of the hottest teams in the nation throughout the season, ranking third in the country in field goal percentage (.498) and 21st in the country in field goal percentage defense (.391) according to the NCAA as of Feb. 27. Additionally, the Blue Raiders rank in the top 50 in five other categories:

Win-Loss Percentage: 11th (.833)

Field Goal Percentage: 3rd (.498)

Field Goal Percentage Defense: 21st (.391)

Scoring Margin: 27th (10.8)

Assists Per Game: 24th (15.6)

Blocks Per Game: 46th (4.6)

Scoring Defense: 44th (61.5)

MT also tops the Sun Belt in five categories (scoring offense, scoring margin, field goal percentage, field goal percentage defense and 3-point percentage defense) and ranks second in four more (scoring defense, assists, assist-to-turnover ratio and 3-point field goal percentage).

Double-Double Duo

LaRon Dendy and JT Sulton each posted double-doubles against Akron on Dec. 4. Dendy collected 19 points and 11 rebounds, while Sulton had 16 points and 11 boards. It marked the fourth double-double of Sulton's career and the second for both Dendy and Sulton this year. It also marked the first time two Blue Raiders had a double-double in the same game since Michael Cuffee (24 pts, 10 rebs) and Marcus Morrisson (10 pts, 11 rebs) did it against Arkansas State on Jan. 13, 2005. It is the 75th time in program history at least two Blue Raiders have had a double-double in one game.

Speaking of Double-Doubles

Dendy added his third and fourth double-doubles of the season in back-to-back games to open Sun Belt play. Dendy had 11 points and 10 rebounds against FIU on Dec. 29, then followed that up with 21 points and 11 boards against South Alabama on Dec. 31. It marked the first time a Blue Raider had back-to-back double-doubles since Steve Thomas accomplished the feat in 2005. Altogether, he has 22 double-figure games this year, nine games of 20 points or more and six double-doubles. He is the first Blue Raider since Steve Thomas and Michael Cuffee to have at least five double-doubles in one season. Thomas had six in 2004-05, while Cuffee had five. **The 10-Win Mark**

MT won 10 games within the first 12 this year, marking the fastest the program has reached the 10-win plateau since the 1990-91 season. It also marks the first time the Blue Raiders have collected at least 10 non-conference victories since the 2004-05 season when MT had 12 non-conference wins.

Halfway There

MT is 23-1 when leading at halftime. The Blue Raiders are outscoring opponents 1156-991 in the second half compared to a 998-835 advantage in the first half. MT is shooting 54.1 percent in the second half, including a 41.3 percent clip from beyond the arc, while holding opponents to 39.6 percent in the second stanza. MT also hasn't trailed in the second half in 11 of the last 17 games.

Oden in the Clutch

Senior guard Jimmy Oden was clutch against Tennessee State on Dec. 1. Oden finished with a career-high 14 points, going 11-for-12 from the stripe. In the final two minutes of the contest, Oden hit 10 consecutive free throws to seal the 77-62 victory. **Knight of Honor**

Prior to earning second-team all-conference accolades, Marcos Knight was named the Sun Belt Player of the Week on Nov. 22. Knight averaged 16.3 points and 7.0 rebounds during a three-game stretch for the Blue Raiders. He became the first Blue Raider to earn the league's weekly honor since Desmond Yates on Jan. 25, 2010 and was the fourth Blue Raider in program history to earn the award. **Painting the Town Blue**

In 26 of 30 games this season, including 22 of the last 25, the Blue Raiders have dominated their opponent in the paint. Altogether the Blue Raiders own a 954-674 advantage in the paint and have outscored their opponents by an average of 9.3 points per game in the paint. The widest margin came against Cumberland when MT owned a 42-8 advantage in the paint (+34). The Blue Raiders' season-high for paint points was 44 at South Alabama. The only contests where MT did not outscore its opponent in the paint were against Belmont on Nov. 20 when the Bruins held a 42-34 advantage, at FIU on Jan. 12 when both teams tied with 26 points in the paint, at Vanderbilt on Jan. 28, with the Commodores holding a 38-32 advantage and at Denver on Feb. 4, with Denver holding a 40-24 advantage. **Sulton Reigns**

Junior forward JT Sulton has developed into one of MT's most consistent players, resulting in a third-team all-conference selection this year. He has started 41 consecutive games, the longest streak of any current Blue Raider. Sulton hasn't missed a start since Jan. 29, 2011. He became the first Blue Raider to record a double-double this season, collecting 12 points and 11 rebounds at Loyola Marymount. It marked the third double-double of his career, with his last coming against UALR (21 pts, 11 reb) in the 2011 Sun Belt tournament. Sulton has reached double figures in 19 contests this season and in those 41 consecutive starts, he has produced a total of 26 double-figure scoring performances. **Shooting the Lights Out**

MT's shooting performance against UCLA on Nov. 15 was one for the ages. The Blue Raiders smashed the school record, shooting a 71.4 percent clip from the field and surpassing the previous mark of 68.9 percent set in 1981. MT has now had five halves of basketball this season shooting 70 percent or better:

2/11 vs. UALR 1st half: 70.0%

11/22 vs Cumberland 2nd half: 75.0%

11/15 vs. UCLA 2nd half: 72.0%

11/15 vs. UCLA 1st half: 70.8%

11/11 vs. Austin Peay: 70.0%

On record, the Blue Raiders had only bettered the 70-percent mark in one half three times in program history prior to this year:

.833 vs. Akron (2/4/82)

.800 vs. Tennessee Tech (1/8/81)

.724 vs. Austin Peay (1/12/87)

Raining Three's

Not only did MT set a record from the field, but the Blue Raiders also hit a Sun Belt record 90.9 percent of their 3-pointers against UCLA. The mark, also a school record, surpassed the previous league record of 90.0 percent set by UAB in 1986 and is tied for fourth in NCAA history.

(Min. 10 made)

03/06/11 - 93.3%, Ohio State (14-15) vs. Wisconsin

12/03/00 - 91.7%, Drexel (11-12) vs. Delaware

12/11/04 - 91.7%, Northern Arizona (11-12) vs. Willamette

11/15/11 - 90.9%, Middle Tennessee (10-11) at UCLA

02/01/88 - 90.9%, Duke (10-11) vs. Clemson

01/16/93 - 90.9%, Hofstra (10-11) vs. Rhode Island

And One More Thing

MT hit its first nine treys and finished 10-of-11 from beyond the arc against UCLA. The Blue Raiders didn't miss a trey until 1:39 to go in the game. Before the streak ended, MT's 9-for-9 performance matched an NCAA record for highest perfect 3-point field goal percentage in a game, set by Minnesota against Penn State on Jan. 11, 2009. **Keeping Up with the Jones'**

Both Shawn and Jason Jones have played key roles for the Blue Raiders this season. Shawn has had eight double-figure games, including a 15-point performance, matching his career-high, against FIU on Dec. 29. Jones ranks second on the team with 32 blocks. After missing the first four games and nine total, Jason has produced five double-figure games in 21 appearances, including three starts. His season-high of 16 points came against ULM on Feb. 23. He also has chipped in 16 assists and seven steals. **Playing Extra**

MT and Belmont played into double overtime on Nov. 20, marking the first overtime game of the season for the Blue Raiders. Last season, MT played four overtime games, including one double-overtime contest, ironically, a loss to Belmont on Dec. 7, 2010. The two contests against Belmont are the only double-overtime games for the Blue Raiders since a triple overtime loss to New Mexico State in 2002. **Spreading the Wealth**

MT's 10-of-11 3-point performance against UCLA was far from a one-man show. In fact, it was a six-man show. Six different Blue Raiders hit a triple, led by Raymond Cintron and Bruce Massey, who each went 3-for-3. In addition, five Blue Raiders scored double-figures. Altogether, 10 Blue Raiders have had at least one double-digit performance this year and nine of them have had multiple double-figure games. **Hammonds Stepping Up**

Sophomore guard Kerry Hammonds reached double-figures for the third time in his career with 11 points against Cumberland, including a 3-for-3 performance from beyond the arc. Hammonds also recorded career-highs in assists (5) and blocks (4) in the contest. After missing seven games, Hammonds picked up where he left off, scoring a season-high 13 points against Arkansas State on Jan. 19. He earned his first start back from injury against WKU on Feb. 9 and has started every game since then (five in a row). **Tremendous Transfers**

In addition to Dendy, three other transfers have made a considerable impact this season: Chipola Junior College transfer Marcos Knight has started each contest. The second-team all-conference selection is the team's second-leading scorer with 11.7 points per game points and is third with 5.2 rebounds per game. He posted his first career double-double with 17 points and 11 rebounds against Belmont. Knight became the third Blue Raider to post a double-double this season and has reached double-figure scoring in 22 contests. His career-high of 19 points came against North Texas on Feb. 2.

Bruce Massey dished out a career-high eight assists against Belmont, then matched that against WKU on Feb. 9 and leads the team with 115 assists this season. In addition, the Dodge City

Community College transfer went 3-for-3 from beyond the arc against UCLA, marking his first 3-point attempts of the season, and scored a season-high 14 points. He made it back-to-back games in double-figures with 11 against UNC Greensboro. His 48 steals are the most on the team.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Junior College transfer Raymond Cintron came off the bench and sank a pair of free throws in his first D-I contest against Austin Peay, then added his first D-I triple against Loyola Marymount. He heated up against UCLA, draining 3-of-3 treys to finish 4-for-4 from the field with 11 points. He followed that performance with a career day against Belmont, going 5-for-9 from 3-point land en route to a career-high 18 points. Cintron added his third double-figure game with 12 points, including 6-of-6 free throw shooting, against UT Martin. He then matched his career-high of 18 points against Ole Miss and made it back-to-back double-figure performances with 12 points against FIU on Dec. 29. Against Troy on Jan. 26, Cintron matched his career-high of six field goals and five treys, finishing with 17 points in the contest.

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