

# Blue Raiders travel to WKU for regular season finale

## MT looking to clinch Sun Belt Tournament berth

May 16, 2012 · Athletic Communications

### First Pitch

Thursday - 6 p.m. CT

Friday - 6 p.m. CT

Saturday - 1 p.m. CT

### **MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -**

Fresh off an 11-4 victory over Tennessee, the Blue Raider baseball team heads to WKU for the final series of the regular season. Middle Tennessee will look to clinch its 11th Sun Belt Tournament berth as the series opens Thursday at 6 p.m. at Nick Denes Field in Bowling Green, Ky. This week's series will mark the second between the two teams this season, as the Blue Raiders (28-25, 13-14 SBC) and Hilltoppers (22-30, 11-16 SBC) also met in the opening conference series in March. Although WKU earned a 9-2 victory in the first game, it was MT that claimed the series with 7-2 and 9-1 wins in the final two contests. The Blue Raiders will be seeking their third straight over the Hilltoppers for the first time



since MT won three in a row from 2005-06, including a game in the league tournament. Dating back to 1974, MT owns a slight advantage in the overall series against WKU, leading 55-54. Since head coach Steve Peterson took over in 1988, the Blue Raiders are 36-30 against the Hilltoppers, including a 20-14 mark at WKU. MT is also looking to snap a four-game skid in Bowling Green. Despite dropping a pair to Louisiana last weekend, MT currently sits fifth in the Sun Belt standings. The Blue Raiders can clinch a tournament berth with one victory this week. Justin Guidry and Trent Miller led the Blue Raiders in the previous meeting against the Hilltoppers. Guidry hit .571 with five runs and three walks, while Miller drove in five runs to go along with a home run and .417 average.

The two remain as the Blue Raiders' top hitters, with Guidry hitting .354 for the season and Miller at .350. Lefthander Jordan Cooper cemented his spot as Thursday's starter after a solid outing to pick up the win in his first league start of the season against Louisiana last weekend. Cooper tossed 6.2 innings, matching his career high, and allowed two runs on five hits with four strikeouts on Friday. He currently holds a 3.46 ERA and is 2-2 on the year. MT's remaining rotation for the WKU series is TBA. The Hilltoppers are coming off an 11-7 victory over Eastern Kentucky on Tuesday. Currently tied at the bottom of the league standings, WKU dropped two out of three to South Alabama last weekend. Offensively, Casey Dykes leads the Hilltoppers with a .301 average and Ryan Hutchison has been the leading RBI-getter, driving in 44 runs. WKU will start a pair of southpaws on Thursday and Friday in Austin Clay and Tim Bado, while Saturday's starter remains TBA. Clay is 3-4 with a 4.97 ERA and Bado is 4-6 with a 4.24 ERA. All three games can be heard on WMOT 89.5, in addition to online at GoBlueRaiders.com, with Dick Palmer and John Callow on the call.

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