

# Baseball releases 2013 schedule

## Season opens Feb. 15 at Reese Smith Jr. Field

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**MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -** Middle Tennessee baseball head coach Jim McGuire unveiled the 2013 schedule on Monday. The rigorous slate features 32 home games and also includes contests against six teams from last year's NCAA Championship field.



"The schedule this year is very similar to last year in that we have a lot of home games, which is great for the fans, but it also pits us against some great competition throughout the season," said McGuire, in his first season at the helm. "Playing an early-season tournament featuring two teams that made the NCAA tournament last year will test our team's mettle against some very good competition, which will help prepare us for a tough Sun Belt slate. The league has so many strong programs that it always makes for a challenging and interesting race for the championship."

The Blue Raiders open the season Feb. 15-17 when Ball State visits Reese Smith Jr. Field. The Feb. 19 contest against Austin Peay, the reigning Ohio Valley champions and first of 12 in-state games, caps off the four-game home stand to begin the season.

MT then hits the road for its first away contests of the 2013 campaign, traveling to Auburn, Ala., for a three-game slate as part of a tournament hosted by the Auburn Tigers. The Blue Raiders face the hosting Tigers on Friday before taking on a pair of teams that received at-large berths in the 2012 NCAA tournament. MT will play the defending Missouri Valley regular season champions in Indiana State on Saturday, then conclude the tournament Sunday against College of Charleston, co-champions of the Southern Conference last season.

After a quick midweek trip to Tennessee Tech on Feb. 26, the Blue Raiders return home for a nine-game stretch beginning with a weekend series against Kennesaw State March 1-3. Lipscomb will make the trip down I-24 on March 5, then MT hosts Xavier for a three-game stretch March 8-10. The home stand concludes with a pair of contests against Southern Illinois March 12-13.

MT opens Sun Belt play March 15-17 at WKU before breaking from league play to face a pair of non-conference foes from the mid-state. The Blue Raiders go to Belmont March 19 and host Vanderbilt March 20, both of which earned berths in last year's NCAA tournament.

The Blue Raiders' will host Louisiana for their first home conference series March 22-24. MT will

spend the next six games on the road, going to Memphis (March 26-27), Troy (March 29-31) and Vanderbilt (April 2).

MT sandwiches a pair of league series around an April 9 contest against Tennessee Tech, welcoming UALR April 5-7 and heading to Florida Atlantic April 12-14. The Blue Raiders then return home for the next five games. Belmont makes the return trip to Murfreesboro April 16 before a three-game stint against FIU. The stretch concludes as Tennessee comes to town April 23.

The Blue Raiders will spend the next seven games away from the Reese Smith Jr. Field, starting at Arkansas State April 26-28. MT heads east to face the Volunteers April 30 and wraps up the road trip with a three-game set at South Alabama.

The season closes with six consecutive conference games at home. The Blue Raiders will host 2012 Sun Belt Tournament champion ULM May 10-12 before finishing off the regular season against the Hilltoppers.

The Sun Belt Championship will be held May 22-26 in Lafayette, La. This year's tournament will feature eight teams in a double-elimination format.

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