Blue Raiders continue road swing at UCF Tuesday

Tipoff slated for 6 p.m. CT in Orlando

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee men's basketball team continues its swing through Florida when the Blue Raiders square off at UCF on Tuesday. The two teams tip off at 7 p.m. ET at UCF Arena.

GAME INFORMATION
Date: Tuesday, Nov. 20
Time: 6 p.m. CT
Location: Orlando, Fla.
Facility: UCF Arena

MEDIA INFORMATION
Radio: WNSR (560 AM)/WGNS (1450 AM, 101.9 FM, 100.5 FM)
Play-by-Play: Chip Walters

Live Video - Live Audio - Live Stats

Twitter: @MTAthletics, @MT_MBB

SERIES INFORMATION

- Overall: UCF leads, 2-0
- At UCF: UCF leads, 1-0
- Under Davis: MT leads, 2-0
- First meeting: UCF 88, MT 77 (12/23/99 in Orlando)
- Last meeting: UCF 68, MT 64 (12/12/00 in Murfreesboro)
- Current Streak: UCF, two games

BLUE RAIDER FASTBREAK POINTS

- MT is one of seven schools in the country receiving votes or ranked in the ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll in football, men's and women's basketball. It is the only non-AQ school in the mix, as Notre Dame, Texas, Louisville, Georgia, Stanford and UCLA comprise the group.

- The 97 points against Alabama State in the season-opener marked the most since MT scored 109 against Houston Baptist on Feb. 13, 2010.
- MT was unanimously picked to win the Sun Belt East Division this year by the league's head coaches.
- Four Blue Raiders earned preseason all-conference honors. Marcos Knight was named to the first team, JT Sulton and Bruce Massey to the second team and Raymond Cintron to the third team.
- Raymond Cintron was rated as the No. 39 shooter in the country according to CBSSports.com's Top 50 shooters.
- MT received three votes in the preseason ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll and is receiving one vote in the latest poll.
- Marcos Knight scored a career-high 21 points in his home state of Georgia against the Savannah State Tigers on Nov. 13. It marked his 25th double-figure game and he currently has 26.
- MT got off to a 2-0 start for the second year in a row, marking the first back-to-back occurrences since the 1995-96 and 1996-97 seasons
- MT returns 10 of its top 12 scorers from last season.

SCOUTING UCF

- The Knights are coming off a 53-50 win over Savannah State on Sunday thanks in part to Keith Clanton's double-double (17 pts, 12 rebs)
- UCF has three players averaging double-figures, led by Isaiah Sykes' 21.0 ppg
- Keith Clanton is averaging 17.7 ppg and Tristan Spurlock is at 12.3 ppg
- Clanton is also the team's leading rebounder with 12.0 boards per game
- UCF returned seven letterwinners, including four starters, from a team that finished 22-11 last season and lost on the first round of the NIT to Drexel

LAST TIME OUT

Middle Tennessee trailed the No. 10 Florida Gators by three at halftime, but the Gators managed to pull away in the second half for a 66-45 win on Sunday at the Tampa Bay Times Forum. It was a back-and-forth contest early, with the first half featuring four ties and four lead changes, but Florida went on a 14-2 run to open the second half and never looked back. The Blue Raiders were led by Marcos Knight with 12 points and five rebounds, while Shawn Jones also cracked double figures with 10 points. JT Sulton grabbed five boards and Tweety Knight chipped in five assists. MT out-rebounded Florida, 34-32, but shot just 32 percent from the field while the Gators hit 46.7 percent of their shots. The Blue Raider bench outs-scored the Gator bench, 26-11.

BENCH PRODUCTION

With 10 of the top 12 scorers returning from last season's team, it's not surprise that MT has a deep bench. The Blue Raider bench currently owns a 126-44 advantage over its opponents.

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONES'

After being hampered by a back injury throughout the 2011-12 season, senior guard Jason Jones picked up where he left off from his sophomore season. Jones was a perfect 9-for-9 from the field and led the Blue Raiders with 19 points in the season-opening win against Alabama State. As a sophomore, Jones led the team in scoring and rebounding with 13.7 points and 5.4 rebounds per game.

SOLID DEBUTS

Two key newcomers wasted no time making an impact in their Blue Raider debuts against Alabama State. Junior guard Tweety Knight earned the start and collected a game-high five assists to go along with nine points and three rebounds. Junior forward Neiko Hunter came off the bench for nine points, three rebounds, two assists and a block.

HIGH SCORING

The 97 points against Alabama State on Nov. 9 marked the most since MT scored 109 against Houston Baptist on Feb. 13, 2010. MT cracked the 90 plateau twice last season, scoring 90 against Austin Peay and 94 against ULM.

AMONG THE NATION'S ELITE

MT is one of just seven schools in the country with the football, men's and women's basketball teams each currently receiving votes or ranked in the ESPN/USA Today Coaches Polls. MT represents the only non-AQ school in the mix, as Notre Dame, Texas, Louisville, Georgia, Stanford and UCLA are the only other schools to boast the accomplishment. The men's and women's basketball teams represent the only Sun Belt teams in their respective polls. It also marks the first time in Sun Belt history a school has had its football, men's and women's basketball teams receiving votes at the same time.

RECEIVING VOTES

On the heels a record-breaking season, the 2012-13 Blue Raider men's basketball team is already receiving recognition in the USA Today coaches' poll. MT, the Sun Belt's only representative in the poll, received three votes in the preseason poll after finishing 27-7 last season and received one vote in the latest poll.

A LITTLE HELP

After ranking 21st nationally in assists per game last year, MT's unselfishness has already been apparent in its first two games. The Blue Raiders had 27 assists on 33 baskets in the season-opener against Alabama State and through three games have 49 assists on 65 field goals, which means about 75 percent of field goals have come from an assist.

CINTRON RECEIVES RECOGNITION

Raymond Cintron was listed at No. 39 on CBSSports.com's Top 50 shooters for the 2012-13 season after hitting 43.2 percent of his shots from beyond the arc last season. The San Juan, Puerto Rico, native ranked sixth in the Sun Belt in 3-point shooting and was ninth with 2.0 treys per game. Overall, Cintron shot 45 percent from the field and averaged 8.4 points per game. Middle Tennessee will also face four shooters on the list throughout the 2012-13 season. Florida's Erik Murphy, Texas Southern's Omar Strong, Belmont's Ian Clark and Tennessee State's Robert Covington were listed among the top 50.

DENDY UPDATE

The regular season is underway for former Blue Raider LaRon Dendy. The 2012 Sun Belt Player of the Year has started every game for Kolossos this year and has helped the Greek team to a 3-2 record. The Greenville, S.C., native is currently the team's leading scorer, averaging 20.0 points per game.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2011-12

- MT won the Sun Belt regular season championship with a 14-2 league record.
- The Blue Raiders earned an NIT bid and made it the quarterfinals, knocking off Marshall and Tennessee in the first two rounds. It marked MT's first win in the postseason since 1989, the first win over the Vols since 1988 and the first win at Tennessee in program history.
- 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 was the first time MT received the Sun Belt's top player award, while the top coaching accolade was 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, 2011, 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 27 wins and 14 league victories were both the most in program history.
- 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 finished the season ranked fourth in the country in field goal percentage. The Blue Raiders shot 49.5 percent from the field.
- 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.
- The Blue Raiders' 11 road wins were the most in program history.
- MT had the sixth largest attendance increase in college basketball.

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