Blue Raiders set to battle Belmont Thursday on CSS/ESPN3

Tipoff slated for 6 p.m. at the Curb Event Center

December 12, 2012 · @MTAthletics

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee men's basketball has won five of its last six and looks to continue its hot streak at Belmont on Thursday. Tipoff is slated for 6 p.m. at the Curb Event Center and the game will air on CSS and ESPN3 with Kevin Ingram and Greg Sage on the call.

GAME INFORMATION
Matchup: Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders (7-2, 1-0 SBC) at Belmont Bruins (6-2, 0-0 OVC)
Date: Thursday, Dec. 13
Time: 6 p.m. CT
Location: Nashville, Tenn.
Facility: Curb Event Center

MEDIA INFORMATION
TV: CSS
Play-by-Play: Kevin Ingram
Analysis: Greg Sage

Radio: WNSR (560 AM)/WGNS (1450 AM, 101.9 FM, 100.5 FM)/WMOT (89.5)
Play-by-Play: Chip Walters
Analysis: Kyle Turnham

ESPN3 - Live Audio - Live Stats

Twitter: @MTAthletics, @MT_MBB

TICKET INFORMATION
Tickets for Middle Tennessee's game at Bridgestone Arena versus Vanderbilt on Dec. 21 at 8 p.m. are now on sale. Tickets are $50 for courtside and $22 for lower bowl. Fans also have the option to purchase a combo for $25 that includes a ticket to both the Vanderbilt game and the game at Belmont on Dec. 13 at 6 p.m.

Students may pick up a voucher for the Vanderbilt game at the Blue Raider Ticket Office until Dec. 20. Students will receive one voucher per ID. Students will be admitted for free, but must show the voucher at Bridgestone Arena beginning at 6 p.m. Students may also purchase guest tickets for $5 but quantities are limited.

For questions, call 1-888-YES-MTSU or visit GoBlueRaiders.com.

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

Santa Claus will pay an early visit to Murphy Center on Tuesday when the Blue Raiders host Tennessee State. Santa will be available for photos behind section O on the track level prior to the 7 p.m. tipoff. Fans can have their photo printed on the spot to take home.

SERIES INFORMATION

- Overall: MT leads, 20-12
- In Nashville: BU leads, 7-5
- Under Coach Davis: Series tied, 5-5
- First meeting: MT 74, BU 68 (1953-54 season)
- Last meeting: MT 65, BU 62 (12/13/11 in Murfreesboro)
- Current Streak: MT, One game
- Longest MT streak: 9 games (1967-97)// Longest BU streak: 4 games (12/17/08-11/20/11)
- Noteworthy: Two of the last three meetings between MT and Belmont have gone to double overtime. In addition to the Bruins' 87-84 2OT victory last season, Belmont also won 88-87 in 2OT on Dec. 7, 2010.
- Noteworthy: The two teams split decisions last year, with Belmont winning the first and MT the second.

BLUE RAIDER FASTBREAK POINTS

- MT is undefeated at home this season at 4-0 and holds a 19-2 record at Murphy Center over the past two seasons. The Blue Raiders have won 17 straight regular-season home games.
- The men's and women's teams have combined for 31 straight regular-season home wins, tied for the fourth longest streak in the nation.
- MT has won three of the last five meetings against SEC opponents.
- Marcos Knight has scored double figures in eight straight games and all but one game this season.
- MT has beaten an SEC opponent in back-to-back seasons for the first time in program history.
- After starting last season 4-0 and with the 5-1 start this season, MT got off to its best back-to-back starts since the 1986-87 and 1987-88 seaons. MT started 1986-87 5-0 and 1987-88 6-1.
- Raymond Cintron scored a career-high 22 points at Akron on Dec. 2 and Marcos Knight matched his career-high with 21 points in the contest. Knight also scored 21 at Savannah State on Nov. 13.
- 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.

SCOUTING BELMONT

- The Bruins are currently 6-2 overall and 2-0 at home.
- Belmont won its last outing, 100-66 vs. Lipscomb on Dec. 4.
- Ian Clark leads four Bruins averaging double-figure scoring with 19.4 points per game. Clark also ranks second in the country in 3-point field goal percentage (58.3) and triples per game (4.38)
- Kerron Johnson (13.9 ppg), Trevor Noack (11.5 ppg) and Blake Jenkins (10.4 ppg) are also averaging double figures. Jenkins is also the leading rebounder with 5.0 boards per game.
- Belmont is outscoring its opponents by a margin of 14.3 points per game
- The Bruins rank third in the country in 3-pointers per game (9.8) and fifth in 3-point field goal percentage (43.6)

LAST TIME OUT
Kerry Hammonds' jumper with 40 seconds remaining proved to be the difference Saturday afternoon as the Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders defeated the Ole Miss Rebels, 65-62, at Murphy Center.

The win was MT's fifth in the last six games and fourth in a row against Ole Miss. The Blue Raiders handed the Rebels their first loss of the season while MT remained undefeated on its home court this year at 4-0. Marcos Knight led the Blue Raiders with 14 points, his eighth straight game in double-figures. Raymond Cintron added 10 points, making 3-of-4 three-pointers.

HOME SWEET HOME
MT has continued to defend its home court this season after finishing 15-2 in Murphy Center last year. The Blue Raiders are 4-0 at home this year and haven't lost a regular-season game in Murphy Center since Nov. 20, 2011 when MT dropped an 87-84 double overtime decision to Belmont. That's 17 straight regular-season home victories for the Blue Raiders. MT is now 19-2 over the last two seasons in Murphy Center.

BENCH PRODUCTION
With 10 of the top 12 scorers returning from last season's team, it's no surprise that MT has a deep bench. The Blue Raider bench currently owns a 304-130 advantage over its opponents.

OUT-REBOUNDING OPPONENTS
The Blue Raiders have out-rebounded their opponent in seven of nine contests this season. MT currently owns a 330-283 rebounding advantage, an average of 36.7 compared to 31.4.

TAKING ON THE SEC
With the win over Ole Miss on Dec. 8, MT has now beaten an SEC opponent in back-to-back seasons for the first time in program history. The Blue Raiders defeated both Tennessee and Ole Miss last season. It also marked the first win over an SEC opponent in Murphy Center since a 93-90 overtime victory against Vanderbilt on Feb. 1, 1995. MT is now 1-1 against the SEC this year (Lost to No. 10 Florida on Nov. 18) and has won three of the last five meetings against SEC opponents.

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONES

Shawn Jones raked in the Sun Belt and Tennessee Sports Writers Association Player of the Week awards on Nov. 27 after posting a pair of double-doubles against UCF and Texas Southern. He tallied 18 points and 13 rebounds, both career-highs, in a 75-61 win over UCF. The Hialeah, Fla., native followed that up by setting a new career-high with 21 points and also grabbed 12 boards in a 79-52 victory over Texas Southern. For the week, Jones averaged 19.5 points and 12.5 rebounds while shooting 66.7 percent from the field. He is the only Blue Raider to start every game this season.

ROAD WARRIORS

MT has picked up where it left off last season after setting the school record with 11 road wins. The Blue Raiders are off to a 3-2 start on the road this year, including one victory in Sun Belt play. MT has won 47 league road games under the direction of Kermit Davis, the most among any conference school.

SWITCHING IT UP

Head coach Kermit Davis has used six different starting lineups this year. Through the first five games, Davis used five different lineups. Games 5-7 remained unchanged. In all, 11 different Blue Raiders have started at least one game this year. The only mainstay each game has been Shawn Jones. Bruce Massey and Marcos Knight have each started seven, James Gallman has started six and Neiko Hunter has five. Raymond Cintron has made three starts, Tweety Knight, Jason Jones and Kerry Hammonds have started two games apiece, while Jacquez Rozier and JT Sulton have each started one game.

DEEP BENCH

All 10 Blue Raiders that saw action at Louisiana on Nov. 29 also scored in the contest. Through nine games, five different Blue Raiders have been the leading scorer and seven Blue Raiders have combined for 25 double-figure scoring performances.

RPI OUTLOOK

MT is currently ranked 36th in the Sagarin Ratings and 39th according to the Pomeroy College Basketball Ratings. The Blue Raiders are the highest ranked Sun Belt team in both ratings.

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.

CINTRON RECEIVES RECOGNITION

Raymond Cintron was listed at No. 39 on CBSSports.com's Top 50 shooters for the 2012-13 season after hitting. The San Juan, Puerto Rico, native currently ranks sixth in the Sun Belt with 2.1 treys per game and leads the team with 16 3-pointers this year. Against Akron on Dec. 2, Cintron sank four 3-pointers en route to a career-high 22 points.

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.

BROTHERLY LOVE

The 2012-13 MT squad features two sets of brothers. Marcos Knight is the older brother of Tweety Knight, with both joining the Blue Raiders via Chipola Junior College. Zane Gibson is the older brother of Gavin Gibson, both coming to MT from Baylor School.

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. The Greenville, S.C., native is currently the team's leading scorer and rebounder, averaging 15.1 points and 5.9 boards per game.

Printed on April 21, 2014
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/64552