

# Blue Raiders put perfect home record on the line against Troy Saturday

## Tipoff slated for 5 p.m. in Murphy Center

February 8, 2013 · @MTAthletics

### MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Riding a 10-game winning streak and 13-0 home record, the Blue Raider men's basketball team welcomes the Troy Trojans to Murphy Center Saturday. Tipoff is slated for 5 p.m. CT.

Tickets are now available for the Sun Belt Championship in Hot Springs, Ark. All-session booklets are \$83 and fans can purchase by calling 1-888-YES-MTSU or clicking [here](#)

### GAME INFORMATION

Matchup: Troy Trojans (10-14, 5-8 SBC) at Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders (21-4, 13-1 SBC)

Date: Saturday, Feb. 9

Time: 5 p.m. CT

Location: Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Facility: Murphy Center

Tickets: Available [here](#) or by calling 1-888-YES-MTSU

### MEDIA INFORMATION

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

Play-by-Play: Chip Walters

Analysis: Kyle Turnham

[Live Video](#) - [Live Audio](#) - [Live Stats](#)

Twitter: [@MTAthletics](#), [@MT\\_MBB](#)

### SERIES INFORMATION

- Overall: MT leads, 10-7 // As Sun Belt foes: MT leads, 8-7



- In Murfreesboro: MT leads, 6-2
- Under coach Davis: MT leads, 8-7
- First meeting: MT 77, Troy 58 (12/5/70 in Murfreesboro)
- First Sun Belt meeting: Troy 70, MT 57 (1/21/06 in Troy)
- Last year: MT 71, Troy 58 (1/26/12 in Murfreesboro) // MT 65, Troy 53 (1/5/12 in Troy)
- Last Troy win in Murfreesboro: Troy 70, MT 67 (2/4/10)
- Current Streak: MT 2 games
- Longest MT streak: 5 games (2/28/07 - 12/11/08)// Longest Troy streak: 3 games (2x, last 2/12/09 - 2/18/10)
- Noteworthy: MT has won three of the last four meetings and four of the last five meetings in Murfreesboro.

### **BLUE RAIDER FASTBREAK POINTS**

- Kermit Davis is tied for second with Gene Bartow of the Sun Belt's all-time winningest coaches with 111 wins. As the winningest active coach, Davis needs just two wins to become the conference's all-time winningest coach, surpassing Ronnie Arrow's 112.
- MT is undefeated at 13-0 in home games this season, including one at Bridgestone Arena, and holds a 27-2 record at Murphy Center over the past two seasons. The Blue Raiders have won 25 straight regular-season home games, which is the fourth-longest streak in the country.
- MT has won 10 in a row, tied for the fifth-longest streak nationally, and 14 of the last 15 games.
- MT's 13 Sun Belt wins are one shy of the school record of 14, set last year.
- MT is one of nine teams in the country 13-0 or better at home this year.
- MT is 10th nationally with an .814 winning percentage over the past two seasons and is tied for sixth nationally with 48 combined wins in the last two years.
- MT currently ranks 25th nationally in 3-point field goal percentage defense (.297). MT is one of three teams in the country with 21 or more wins. Only Gonzaga has more with 22. MT is tied with Michigan.
- MT ranks 28th nationally in defensive efficiency with a rating of 89.7 according to Pomeroy. The Blue Raiders have held five of their last seven opponents to 60 points or less and 12 of their last 15.
- MT has back-to-back 20-win seasons for the first time since the 1987-88 and 1988-89 seasons.
- With the 18-4 start this year and the 20-2 start last year, MT is off to its best back-to-back starts in 26 years.

### **SCOUTING TROY**

- Troy is coming off a 65-62 loss at South Alabama on Thursday
- The Trojans are 2-9 on the road this season, with the only road conference win coming at ULM in overtime on Jan. 26
- Troy has dropped two of its last three, with both losses coming on the road
- Emil Jones is the leading scorer with 11.4 points per game and Ray Chambers is the top rebounder at 5.9 boards per game

### **LAST TIME OUT**

Middle Tennessee used a 20-4 run at the start of the second half en route to knocking off Arkansas State, 73-60, inside the Murphy Center on Thursday night. Marcos Knight scored 15 points and had 11 rebounds for his first double-double of the season and second of his career, while Neiko Hunter registered a career-high 17 points. MT led by as many as 31 and never trailed, out-scoring ASU 44-20 in the paint and 34-26 off the bench.

### **ALL THEY DO IS WIN**

With 21 wins, the Blue Raiders have already clinched a winning season. This is the ninth winning season under Davis and fifth in the last six years for MT. MT has also cracked double-figure wins for six straight seasons. The Blue Raiders have won double-digit games at home in each of the past six years and nine of 11 seasons under Davis. MT now has back-to-back 20-win seasons for the first time since the 1987-88 and 1988-89 seasons. Ironically, in 1987-88, MT finished 23-11, went to the NIT and won two games, including one over Tennessee. The Blue Raiders followed that up with a 23-8 record and NCAA tournament berth where they beat Florida State before falling to Virginia.

### **SUN BELT'S WINNINGEST COACH**

With South Alabama's Ronnie Arrow retiring earlier this season, Kermit Davis is now the Sun Belt's winningest active coach. He is one of only four league coaches to crack the century mark and is tied with Gene Bartow for second all-time with 111 league wins, one shy of Arrow (112).

### **STIFF COMPETITION**

MT's four losses this season have come against some tough competition. The four teams that have beaten the Blue Raiders have a .767 (69-21) combined winning percentage. Florida currently ranks No. 2 in both the AP and USA Today Coaches' Poll, while Belmont and Akron are each receiving votes in both polls.

### **HEADED TO C-USA**

MT will join Conference USA for the 2013-14 season. Next year will feature a 16-game schedule for with each school playing every team in the league once and a geographic opponent twice (no divisions). Middle Tennessee's home and away opponent will be UAB. The 2014 C-USA men's and women's basketball tournaments will take place at UTEP.

### **SUSTAINED LEADERSHIP**

On Jan. 5, MT women's basketball head coach Rick Insell earned his 183rd win to become the program's all-time winningest coach. Insell joined MT men's basketball head coach Kermit Davis, who set the school record on Dec. 29, 2011, as an all-time wins leader. MT is just one of four schools (Gonzaga, Sacred Heart and UALR) to have both their current men's and women's basketball coaches as all-time wins leaders.

### **RANKINGS**

MT ranks the highest in the Sun Belt in all of the following:

NCAA RPI: 32

ESPN Daily RPI: 30

ESPN BPI: 48

Pomeroy: 44

Sagarin: 57

ESPN Mid-Major Poll: 3

Bleacher Report Mid-Major: 5

### **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 13-0 in home games, including a win at Bridgestone Arena, 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 25 straight regular-season home victories for the Blue Raiders. MT is 27-2 over the last two seasons in Murphy Center.

### **EXPERIENCED SQUAD**

According to Ken Pomeroy, MT is tied as the second-most experienced team in the country with an average of 2.53 years, behind only Valparaiso (2.69) and matching Savannah State. The roster features a combined 13 juniors and seniors compared to four freshmen and sophomores.

### **DEEP BENCH**

The Blue Raider bench accounts for 42.5 percent of the minutes, which ranks 11th nationally according to Pomeroy. MT currently has nine players averaging more than 12 minutes per game. Seven of those are averaging more than 18 minutes. Nine different Blue Raiders have been the leading scorer and ten Blue Raiders have combined for 67 double-figure scoring performances.

### **BENCH PRODUCTION**

The Blue Raider bench has outscored its opponent in all but one game this season, currently owning a 688-326 advantage, or an average of 28.9 to 14.1 points per game.

### **MAINTAINING THE LEAD**

MT has not trailed after halftime in nine of the last 10 games. The Blue Raiders are 17-0 this season when leading at halftime.

### **SWITCHING IT UP**

Head coach Kermit Davis has used 11 different starting lineups this year. In all, 11 different Blue Raiders have started at least one game this year.

### **DOMINATING DEFENSE**

Pomeroy ranks the Blue Raiders 25th in 3-point defense at 29.7 percent and 28th nationally in defensive efficiency with a rating of 89.7. MT held North Texas to 18.5 percent shooting in the first half of the Dec. 31 contest. That is the best field goal percentage defense for the Blue Raiders since Feb. 1, 2007 when MT held Denver to 18.2 percent (4-for-22) in the second half. MT also held North Texas to five field goals in the first half, a season-low for an opponent. It was the fewest field goals for an opponent in a half since Arkansas State had five on Jan. 19, 2012 in the second half.

### **INTIMIDATION FACTOR**

Opponents haven't had much luck at the line against MT. The opposition is shooting 63.1 percent from the stripe, third-lowest in the country.

### **OUT-REBOUNDING OPPONENTS**

The Blue Raiders have out-rebounded their opponent in 18 contests this season. MT currently owns a 919-777 rebounding advantage, or 36.8 compared to 31.1 rpg.

### **TAKING ON THE SEC**

With the win over Vanderbilt on Dec. 21, MT has now beaten two SEC opponents in back-to-back

seasons for the first time in program history. MT also beat Ole Miss on Dec. 8. The Blue Raiders defeated both Tennessee and Ole Miss last season.

The win over Ole Miss this year 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 2-1 against the SEC this year (Lost to No. 10 Florida on Nov. 18) and has won four of the last six meetings against SEC opponents.

### **WINNING BIG**

MT's 82-50 win over UALR and 82-60 win over Louisiana marked the first time in 15 years the Blue Raiders beat consecutive conference opponents by at least 20 points. On Jan. 13, 1998, MT beat OVC foe Tennessee Tech, 80-60, then on Jan. 15 beat Austin Peay, 63-38.

### **TEAM OF THE WEEK**

Middle Tennessee was named the Mid-Major Team of the Week by ESPN.com's Myron Medcalf on Dec. 13. The Blue Raiders earned the nod after knocking off Ole Miss, 65-62.

### **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. The San Juan, Puerto Rico, native currently ranks third in the Sun Belt with a 42.5 3-point field goal percentage and leads the team with 51 3-pointers this year. Against Akron on Dec. 2, Cintron sank four 3-pointers en route to a career-high 22 points. He tied his career-high of five 3-pointers against Tennessee State on Dec. 18.

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.

### **WHERE ARE THEY NOW**

Kermit Davis, a former assistant coach at Idaho, is one of four current head coaches that comprised the 1986-87 Idaho staff.

Tim Floyd - Head Coach (now HC at UTEP)

Larry Eustachy - Assistant Coach (now HC at Colorado State)

Kermit Davis - Assistant Coach

Randy Bennett - Graduate Assistant (now HC at Saint Mary's)

*Printed on July 31, 2014*

*Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/65560>*