

Blue Raiders earn national recognition from Baseball America, Perfect Game

Slatton named Sun Belt's top newcomer

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

The Blue Raider baseball team is already receiving national recognition for the upcoming season from a pair of collegiate baseball publications.

Baseball America named freshman Heath Slatton the top newcomer in the Sun Belt. Slatton is a two-way player who led Columbia Central High School to the Class AAA state title game in 2011. A lefthanded batter and righthanded pitcher, Slatton has the potential to make a significant impact this season both at the plate and on the mound throughout the season.



Senior Hunter Adkins is listed as the No. 9 top prospect in the league according to *Baseball America* and 29th nationally among seniors. Adkins was drafted in the 18th round by the Milwaukee Brewers last summer, but elected to stay for his senior campaign. The Signal Mountain, Tenn., native earned a 5-6 record last year with a 5.75 ERA and ranked second on the team with 59 strikeouts. Adkins will once again serve as the Friday starter and will take the mound Feb. 15 for the Blue Raiders' season opener.

While *Baseball America* picked the Blue Raiders to finish sixth in the Sun Belt, *Perfect Game* has MT coming in at No. 3 behind Florida Atlantic and FIU. Perfect game also selected Johnny Thomas and Trent Miller to the Preseason All-Conference Team. Thomas started every game for MT at second base and hit .277 to earn All-Sun Belt Second Team accolades last season. Miller was a staple in the outfield last season and is MT's returning leading hitter, averaging .345 with a team-best 13 home runs last year to earn ABCA All-South Central Region First Team honors.

MT opens the 2013 season this weekend with a three-game series against Ball State at Reese Smith Jr. Field. Former Blue Raider Dewon Brazelton, the third overall pick in the 2001 MLB Draft,

will be on hand to throw out the first pitch for Friday's 3 p.m. start.

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