# Blue Raiders host ULM for Senior Night on Saturday

## Six seniors to be honored prior to 5:30 tipoff

February 22, 2013 · @MTAthletics

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -** Fresh off clinching the Sun Belt's regular-season title, the Blue Raider men's basketball team will play its final home game of the 2012-13 campaign on Saturday. Middle Tennessee will host ULM in the season finale at 5:30 p.m. following the women's game. Prior to tipoff, MT will honor six seniors - Raymond Cintron, James Gallman, Jason Jones, Marcos Knight, Bruce Massey and JT Sulton.

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. For more information about the tournament and Hot Springs, click here.

**GAME INFORMATION**
Matchup: ULM Warhawks (4-19, 3-14 SBC) at Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders (24-4, 16-1 SBC)
Date: Saturday, Feb. 23
Time: 5:30 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, 8-6 // As Sun Belt foes: MT leads, 6-3

- In Murfreesboro: Series tied, 3-3
- Under Davis: MT leads, 6-3
- First meeting: MT 73, ULM 69 (12/2/72 in Monroe)
- First Sun Belt meeting: ULM 67, MT 65 (12/17/06 in Murfreesboro)
- Last meeting: MT 66, ULM 57 (1/12/13 in Monroe)
- Last ULM win in Murfreesboro: ULM 67, MT 65 (12/17/06)
- Current Streak: MT, 6 games
- Longest MT streak: 6 games (3/5/08 - present) // Longest ULM streak: 4 games (12/30/89 - 1/24/08)
- Noteworthy: MT has not lost to ULM since Jan. 24, 2008, when the Warhawks captured an 82-69 win in Monroe. MT has won the last three meetings in Murfreesboro.

**BLUE RAIDER FASTBREAK POINTS**

- Kermit Davis is the Sun Belt's all-time winningest coach with 114 league wins. He broke the record at UALR in MT's 66-61 win on Feb. 16.
- MT clinched its second-straight Sun Belt regular-season title and third in the last four years, in addition to the No. 1 seed at the league tournament with the win over South Alabama on Feb. 23.
- MT is undefeated at 15-0 in home games this season, including one at Bridgestone Arena, and holds a 29-2 record at Murphy Center over the past two seasons. The Blue Raiders have won 27 straight regular-season home games, which is fourth-longest in the country.
- MT has won 13 in a row, the fifth-longest streak nationally and matching the second-longest in MT history, and 17 of the last 18 games.
- MT's 16 league wins are a school record, surpassing the mark of 14 set last season.
- MT is one of four teams in the country 15-0 or better at home this year and one of three teams with at least 23 wins and nine road wins.
- MT is seventh nationally with an .823 winning percentage over the past two seasons and tied for fifth with 51 combined wins in the last two years.
- MT currently ranks 20th nationally in scoring defense (58.0) and 14th in 3-point field goal percentage defense (.292).
- MT is tied for the second-most wins in the country, behind Gonzaga with 26. Indiana and Louisiana Tech also have 24 wins.
- MT ranks 17th nationally in defensive efficiency with a rating of 87.9 according to Pomeroy. The Blue Raiders have held seven of their last nine opponents to 60 points or less and 14 of their last 17.

**SCOUTING ULM**

- The Warhawks have dropped six of their last seven, including a 75-57 loss at WKU on Thursday
- ULM is 1-12 on the road, with the only road win coming at North Texas on Jan. 5
- Amos Olatayo leads ULM with 16.2 points per game
- Trent Mackey (11.0 ppg) and Jayon James (10.0) are also averaging double figures

**PREVIOUS MEETING**

Middle Tennessee earned a 66-57 victory over the ULM Warhawks on Jan. 12 at Fant-Ewing Coliseum. Marcos Knight paced the Blue Raiders with 17 points and nine rebounds, while Bruce

Massey added 12 points, including an 8-for-8 performance at the line. Knight also dished out five assists and had three steals, with Massey chipping in three assists. JT Sulton led MT on the boards with 10 rebounds and also tallied eight points. Neiko Hunter added nine points and Torin Walker scored a career-high eight points.

The Blue Raiders never trailed in the contest, but did not pull away until late in the first half. Leading 16-12 with 9:47 to go in the early stanza, Walker knocked down a pair of free throws to spark a 14-2 run over the next six minutes. MT held the Warhawks without a field goal for more than seven minutes during the spurt and built up a 16-point lead, the largest of the game, at 30-14.

**LAST TIME OUT**

Five Blue Raiders hit double figures as Middle Tennessee clinched the Sun Belt regular season title and knocked off South Alabama, 85-50, on Thursday night at the Murphy Center. MT earned the No. 1 seed for the upcoming league tournament. The Blue Raiders started the game on a 13-0 run and never looked back. In a bruising contest where called fouls out-numbered made field goals, MT hit 78.8 percent (26-of-33) from the charity stripe. USA, who is currently in second place in the league, hit just 19 free throws.

**CHAMPS AGAIN**

With the 85-50 win over South Alabama on Feb. 21, MT clinched its second-straight Sun Belt regular-season title and third in the last four years. MT was the first team in the country to clinch its conference title. The Blue Raiders earned the No. 1 seed for the upcoming conference tournament and a first-round bye.

**RECEIVING VOTES**

MT is now receiving votes in both the AP and USA Today Coaches Polls. The Blue Raiders received votes in the coaches poll for the fifth straight week with 15 and entered the AP Poll for the first time this season with three votes.

**ALL THEY DO IS WIN**

With 24 wins, the Blue Raiders have 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**

Kermit Davis became the Sun Belt's all-time winningest coach with MT's 66-61 victory at UALR on Feb. 16, 2013 with his 113th league win. Davis surpassed South Alabama's Ronnie Arrow who had 112 league wins. Davis currently has 114 league wins.

**HOME DOMINANCE**

MT has made a habit of winning big at home in Sun Belt action. The Blue Raiders have won 10 straight conference home games by double figures, dating back to an eight-point victory over UALR on Feb. 11, 2012.

**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 .777 (80-23) combined winning percentage. Florida currently ranks No. 4 in the coaches poll and No. 5 in the AP poll, while Akron is 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). MT'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: 27
ESPN Daily RPI: 23
ESPN BPI: 44
Pomeroy: 25
Sagarin: 51
ESPN Mid-Major Poll: 2
Bleacher Report Mid-Major: 3
AP Poll: RV (3)
USA Today Coaches Poll: RV (15)

**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 15-0 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 27 straight regular-season home victories for the Blue Raiders. MT is 29-2 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 41.8 percent of the minutes, which ranks 13th nationally according 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 81 double-figure scoring performances.

**BENCH PRODUCTION**

The Blue Raider bench has outscored its opponent in all but one game this season, currently owning a 840-395 advantage, or an average of 30.0 to 14.1 points per game. MT's bench scored a season-high 55 points against Troy on Feb. 9.

**MAINTAINING THE LEAD**

MT did not trail for three straight games from Feb. 2-9 or five of the last seven. MT has not trailed after halftime in 12 of the last 13 games. The Blue Raiders are 20-0 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 eighth in 3-point defense at 28.9 percent and 12th nationally in defensive efficiency with a rating of 87.2. 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 62.9 percent from the stripe, second-lowest in the country.

**OUT-REBOUNDING OPPONENTS**

The Blue Raiders have out-rebounded their opponent in 21 contests this season. MT currently owns a 1035-862 rebounding advantage, or 37.0 compared to 30.8 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 52-point victory over Troy on Feb. 9 was the largest margin of victory in a Sun Belt game in program history. 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 second in the Sun Belt with a 43.3 3-point field goal percentage and leads the team with 61 3-pointers this year. Against Akron on Dec. 2, Cintron sank four 3-pointers en route to a career-high 22 points. He hit a career-high six treys against Troy on Feb. 9.

**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.

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