



MT slams the 'Dores' shut

In Sports, page 7



Marv and Crisis hitt 'em hard

In Flash!, page 5

Will the win against Vandy affect your attendance at MTSU football games?

INSIDE: Support shown at first football game should continue

In Opinions, page 3

Middle Tennessee State University

SIDELINES

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Campus Briefs

Rally to feature hypnotist

The second Raider Rally of the football season will be held Friday on the Knoll by the Keathley University Center.

The festivities will kick off at 5 p.m. and will include performances by the Band of Blue and comedy hypnotist Dale K.

This pep rally is intended to encourage students to attend Saturday's football game against Troy State.

'Blow' at KUC theater

MTSU Films is presenting Blow at 7 and 9 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and at 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday in the Keathley University Center theater.

The film is based on a true story and follows the life of a high school football star who is lured into the drug smuggling business. It documents the extreme highs and lows that he faces over his lifetime.

Tickets are \$2. For more information, call 898-2551

MTSU celebrates birthday

MTSU will celebrate its 90th birthday Saturday from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

The reception will be held in front of the Alumni Center preceding the football game against Troy State and will include free food, birthday cake, music, games, prizes and surprises for all ages. In addition, the Band of Blue will perform songs from each of MTSU's nine decades.

For more information, call 898-2922.

Webcast open to public

A Webcast commemorating the 50th anniversary of the San Francisco Treaty will take place Thursday from 6-8 p.m. in the State Farm Lecture Hall of the Business and Aerospace Building.

MTSU students and the general public are invited to attend the Webcast, titled "20/20 Vision: A Digital Roadmap to the Future of U.S.-Japan Relations," which presents the opportunity to gain insight into the U.S.-Japan relationship.

Business leaders, educators and statesmen will discuss the relationship between the two largest democracies and economies in the world.

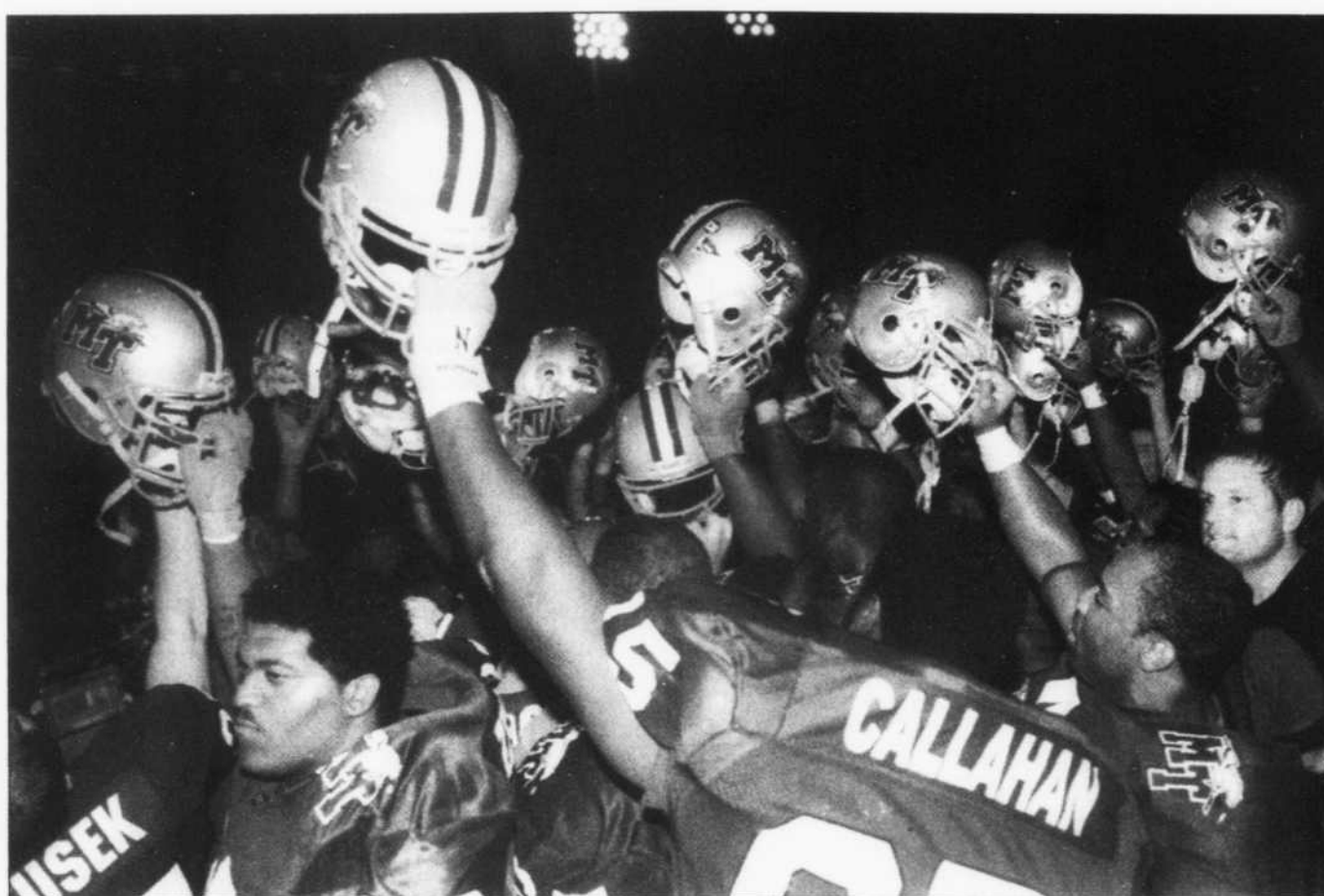
'MTSU Magazine' honored

MTSU Magazine, which is produced by the staff of Publications and Graphics, received awards at this year's APEX Award Contest, which is sponsored by the editorial staff of Writing That Works: The Business Communications Report.

The magazine was honored with the distinction of excellence in the categories of Design and Illustration and Magazine and Journals.

In addition, a poster designed by staff member Darrell Burks to commemorate Tennessee Archeology Week received an award.

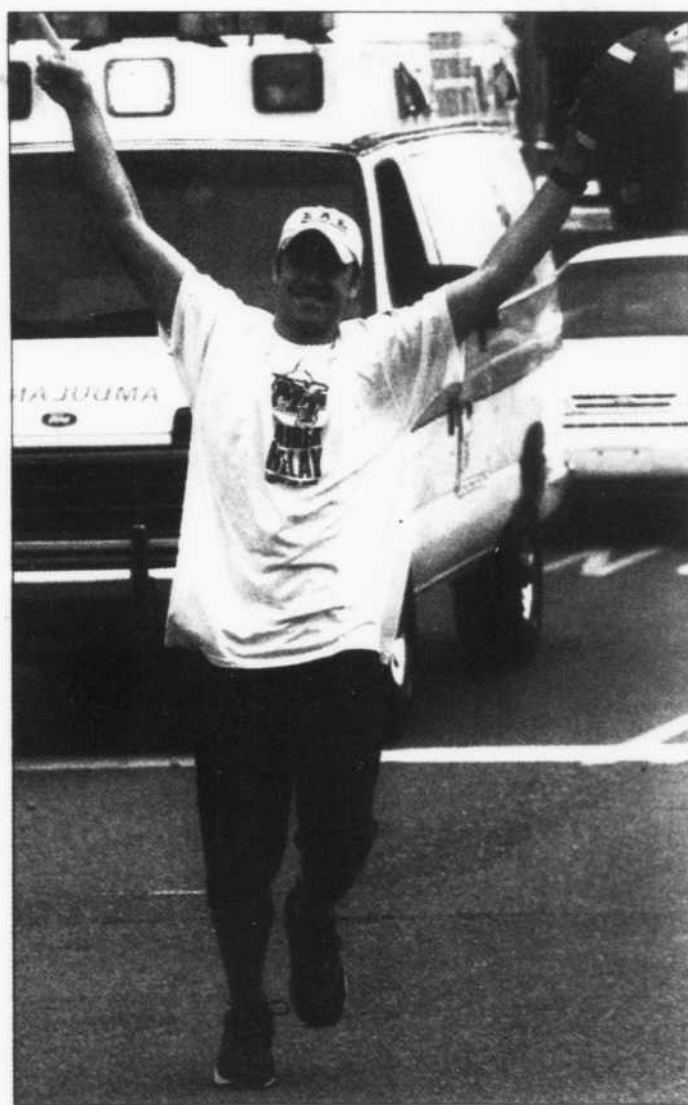
'Little Middle' no more



Photos by Matthew H. Starling | Photo Editor

(Above) The football team raises their helmets as the last seconds tick off of the game clock.

(Below) John Festervand of Sigma Alpha Epsilon runs the game ball during the last leg of the Raider Relay Thursday.



Blue Raiders upset Vandy in 37-28 thriller

By Colleen Cox
Sports Editor

The Middle Tennessee football team beat Vanderbilt 37-28 Thursday night at Vanderbilt Stadium.

In a 41,600-seat stadium, 39,885 fans showed up for the game. About half of those fans were wearing blue.

Coaches and players said the Blue Raider fans made all the difference.

"Our fans were the difference in the game," head coach Andy McCollum said.

"We came out and saw all of the blue in the stands and they were there at 6 p.m. to cheer us onto the field. I have said that the support is there and if everyone that was at the Vandy game will just bring one friend, we can fill our stadium up."

"Our fans were there with us through thick and thin."

and I think they gave us an edge in the game."

"The campus really needed more school spirit when I got here," running back Dwone Hicks said.

"Everyone was worried about going to see UT or TSU play. But now the focus seems to be more on MT football."

"Coming home from the game, you could really see the spirit. A lot of people were beeping their horn and hollering."

"We just want those people to show up Saturday."

"It was awesome to see the stadium full of blue," said linebacker Tanka Scott.

"That's what we want to see this week, too. It really gave us an extra boost to see all the fan support."

See tomorrow's Sidelines for more pictures from the Vanderbilt vs. MTSU game.

New machines, doctors planned for health services

By Amber Bryant
Staff Writer

MTSU Health Services has big plans this semester to put student health fees to work.

"Since the students fund us, we're trying to respond to their needs," said Richard Chapman, director of health services.

One of the first goals in mind is to hire an extra doctor, nurse and physician's assistant to better support the university's growing population.

The number of visitors to the clinic has reached up to 130 students per day by the second week of the semester, which is an extreme amount of responsi-

bility for the small staff.

Another objective is to add new equipment to the building.

Pat Spangler, MTSU's medical director, hopes to purchase an electrocardiogram and CBC machine before Christmas, as well as X-ray equipment at some point in the spring.

Health services' building - located across from Cummings Hall - may also be undergoing some changes in the near future.

"We hope to do a pretty major renovation. It probably won't involve any new square footage, but we hope to reconfigure our space for more exam rooms and more offices so we

can handle more students," Chapman said.

After hiring a new doctor and creating a little more room, health services hopes to add a women's health clinic to the building.

"[The women's health clinic] is in response to a number of requesting students," Chapman said.

The clinic will provide birth control options for female students, as well as pap smears and family planning counseling. Spangler expects this will be a huge convenience to women on campus.

"I understand right now [women] are having to wait six

months to get an appointment to have a pap smear," Spangler said.

"If they have an urgent matter, where are they supposed to go?"

Also planned for the future are pre-employment physicals and measles, mumps and rubella inoculations for incoming students.

In his second semester as medical director, Spangler has been busy giving lectures on sexually transmitted diseases and first aid to University 101 classes, assisting with sports physicals for MTSU athletes, as well as doctoring the usual flow of student ailments.

Some events on the health services schedule this semester include the meningitis and flu clinics, which were a success last winter.

Approximately 750 people showed up to be vaccinated against the illnesses, and Spangler hopes the number will rise significantly this year.

"We'd love to see more shots given," he said.

The meningitis clinic is set for Oct. 9 in the Keathley University Center, Room 322, from 12:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. It is open to all faculty and students for \$85. The vaccination lasts for five years. ♦

The current faculty mem-

See Faculty, 2

Faculty: Hiring freeze over

Continued from 1

bers have been shifted somewhat to accommodate the shortage.

"The faculty we hire have an area of skill, as well as a cognate specialty, so that we can shuffle them around to teach different classes," Burriss said.

Burriss also said that most of the understaffing has occurred in the lower-division introductory classes, where the student-to-teacher ratios have increased as a result.

He added another problem in the college is a lack of classroom space and a lack of office space for new faculty members.

"Because we're so technically oriented, we can't just add people. We have to add studios and equipment," he said.

"We're still trying to do the best we can for our students."

Budget problems at the state level have aggravated further the problem of understaffing.

"We're not getting the resources we need to support this badly needed growth," McPhee said.

While school projections had been for a 1 percent enrollment increase, McPhee said there has actually been a 5 percent increase.

Enrollment caps and higher admission standards are two of the possibilities being discussed in order to stretch state funding.

McPhee is hesitant to fully support either option, however, because he wants education to be readily available to all people.

"Only 17 percent of the state has participated in higher education. That's an embarrassing number," he said.

McPhee allotted enough

resources to hire 120 new faculty members. He said the unfilled positions will probably be reviewed again in the spring when the application and interview process usually occurs.

The TBR's hiring freeze was recently lifted by the chancellor, according to McPhee.

The freeze had prevented most departments from actively pursuing any applicants or potential applicants.

Now that the freeze has ended, McPhee said, "I've asked department heads to be judicious in their spending, because we do have to participate in a 1 percent budget cut."

He explained that the 1 percent cut amounted to about \$800,000 of state funding lost to the school.

McPhee said, "Because of the hiring, we have to look at the mix again. By the end of October, we should have a new analysis to show any understaffing by department."

Requirements for college-level teachers are set by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

McPhee explained a master's degree is required to teach at the undergraduate level, as well as a minimum of 18 hours of coursework in the discipline a person will be teaching.

"Any exceptions must be approved by the department," McPhee said. "Most of our faculty far exceed [the minimum requirements]."

Graduate faculty positions usually require a master's degree and a doctorate.

The staffing situation will be reviewed again later in the semester. ♦

Student organizations discuss future

By Amanda Maynard
Staff Writer

MTSU's student organizations met last night to discuss the steps necessary for creating a new student organization.

The meeting, led by Student Development Coordinator Maggie Prugh, was designed to encourage students to become participating members of student life on campus.

"We want students to be able to easily establish themselves on campus and create new programs and activities for themselves and other students," Prugh said.

Basic requirements for starting a student organization include having a minimum of five currently enrolled students and a faculty/staff advisor. The organization also must meet with Prugh to discuss the process, fill out paperwork and

submit a constitution.

"The most successful groups here have strong leaders and an active faculty/staff adviser," Prugh said.

MTSU currently has 170 active student organizations and usually has between 150 and 200 at any given time.

Organization categories include community service, departmental (organizations related to curricular majors and minors), fraternity, governing body, Greek, human issues, honor society, leadership, military, multi-cultural, music, non-traditional, professional society, political, religious, recreational, sorority, self-help, team competition, university service and women.

The organization approval process can be intimidating, Prugh said.

"Sometimes the approval process is slowed down if they

are missing paperwork or if something is unclear in the constitution," Prugh said.

"Any group has the right to form on our campus. Our job is to ensure that they successfully meet our basic requirements in order to get started," she said.

Gene Fitch, chairperson for the Student Activities Fee Committee discussed the application process and some changes that had occurred since last semester.

Students may make a request for money online as opposed to on disk like last semester. The Fee Committee has designated \$170,000 for organizations this year, 90 percent of which usually covers organizations' travel expenses.

"We want to fund as much as we can with the money we have," Fitch said.

Bonita Kimbrell, manager for the Event Coordination

Office, also discussed some new changes to the process for reserving a meeting place for organizations.

Organizations can now find help in scheduling a meeting place online or by contacting the scheduling center.

The Events Coordination Office has designated four general meeting place options for all student organizations.

The buildings include Peck Hall, Cason Kennedy Nursing Center, Business and Aerospace Building and the McWherter Learning Resource Center.

The deadline for student organizations to apply for activity fees is Sept. 14.

For more information on starting a new student organization, contact Maggie Prugh at 904-8418 or e-mail her at mprugh@mtsu.edu. ♦

Student Publications Open House

Sept. 6, 4-6 p.m.

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SIDELINES ♦ 3

From the staff

Blue Raiders, keep showing school spirit

We at *Sidelines* want to extend our hearty congratulations to MTSU Blue Raiders all over the mid-state region. While the football team won on the field, the sea of blue shirts, hats and ponchos overwhelmed the gold at Dudley Field.

Now that we have established our position as the second strongest college football team in the state of Tennessee, the pressure is on both football players and fans alike to continue to strive for excellence. The bar has been raised, and if we want the football team to continue its Sun Belt domination, then we must all take an active part in supporting them.

That means keep coming to Raider Rallies the night before games. The food never stops being free, after all. Don't be afraid to congratulate a player when you see him walking across the Knoll on his way to class. And don't hesitate to burn that disgustingly orange shirt and wear some royal blue around campus.

There's no shame in supporting the home team, especially when that team is a winner. Best of all, no one will call you a bandwagon fan because the team really is just beginning its foray into Division I-A.

Our next opponent is Troy State, which we play Saturday at Floyd Stadium. There's no excuse for missing this game because the Athletic Department has put it in your own back yard. And the followers of Ms. Cheap please take note that tickets are free with your student ID.

So, call mommy and daddy, dare to invite them to see your dorm room or apartment, and make a night of it by bringing them to the game (maybe you'll get a sweet dinner out of the deal). After all, you won't want to miss out on the second win of the season, would you? ♦

Correction

A photo in the Aug. 30 issue of *Sidelines* incorrectly identified Mary Nichols as Amy Nichols. *Sidelines* regrets the error.

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Oh, what a brave new world

For Argument's Sake



Jason Cox
Asst. News
Editor

Ah, what promise the future held.

Remember the childhood (or late teen) visit to Disney World and seeing that exhibit about the future and the kick-ass things we would have? We'd never have to drive ourselves, cook our own food or clean our house again!

And what about the Jetsons, Hanna-Barbara's show intended to compliment the Flintstones? Flying cars, television communication systems, giant computer setups and robot maids seemed to be the way of the future.

I remember reading my *Weekly Reader* in fifth grade and seeing that development of the first flying cars had advanced significantly and that these cars would be available in the near future.

Well, it's 2001 and I want my flying car!

In the 21st century, I'm cooking my own noodles, driving myself to school

and work and cleaning my own apartment (in theory). What's with this? Must I really put forth effort in this day and age just to get menial everyday tasks done?

I am a child of the age of technology. I expect what I want fast, cheap, distilled and pure. This stem cell thing is great, sure, but what about my needs? I want to be able to take my car and fly over traffic jams on my way to landing on the roof of my next class. I want to return home from a long day to a clean apartment and a hot meal (insert your own misogynist joke here) courtesy of my robot house servants.

The future promised big computers with cool flashing lights that could perform any operation and answer any question. Instead we have sterile-looking desktop units that are pretty cool ... when they work right.

The innovations that we have are all right, I guess, but are nothing like the stuff I dreamed of as a kid. Caller ID? It's nice, but if someone calls that I really don't want to talk to, I'll just hang up on them. Cloning? Sure, but until we can make copies of ourselves as easily as I can

make a copy in a Xerox machine, I'm not interested. UT can keep their damn sheep.

I think what disappoints me most is the way that all of this cool stuff, once produced, is going to look. The incredibly tacky look that future inventions had when conceived by Disney and Hanna-Barbara will be absent. Instead, they will look quite similar to their modern counterparts, with perhaps the exception of a spoiler here and a stripe there.

We need bubble tops for cars (like Homer Simpson's failed concept) and the little rings on antennas! We need a sassy robot to keep the house clean and raise our children! We need to condense, re-organize and rethink our ways of obtaining information until one day we can hook up to a machine every morning and have all the day's news sent directly to our brain!

Think of it: one day we may have absolutely no responsibilities! We will have all the time in the world to do things like play virtual reality video games (which haven't lived up to their promise either).

Just think of what the future could hold! ♦

How Joe spent his summer vacation

Bathroom Stall Graffiti



Nick Fowler
Staff Columnist

Another MTSU student has found a page torn from Joe's notebook. This page was bound with brown masking tape in Webster's New World Dictionary between pages 332 and 333 and labeled Three Hundred Thirty-Two and One-Half, which was typeset in the Optima font at a large 18 points, an interesting choice as Optima is a 20th century humanistic sans serif font. The remainder of the page is set in 10 point Cheltenham designed at the turn of the century according to readability studies, a font not unlike, in character, as Joe.

It begins...

This summer I worked at CUSTOMS, taking the new kids around campus and telling them how things work here so as to get them ready, turn them into useful little MTSU student soldiers ready to conquer the world with learning or smart bombs if they just won't listen to reason.

Sure we all remember how boring CUSTOMS was, but try it while wearing the blue polo shirt with MTSU Blue Raider logo and customized nametag, along with "I'm going on a safari to wrestle hippos in the Nile" khaki shorts from the Gap.

Then there are the 15 fresh out of high school teenagers who are forced to listen to me, whose

minds will soon fill with anything I tell them. They get the special tour and an unscripted diatribe on the troubles of MTSU.

I find it best to take the troop to see the classrooms and a few teachers, too many of which are adjunct faculty members because we cannot afford enough full-time teachers. You'll notice the 40 desks packed into the classroom filling the room wall to wall. This is to make educating the filthy masses cheaper though not necessarily better.

Not to worry. I'm sure the experts made a graph showing how class size affects quality of education, and have decided how much less we'll learn so as to save the state and our strapped for cash taxpayers a few dollars. Well, maybe more than a few dollars.

A trip to the parking lot is always a fun hike. I take the newcomers to the lot as far from campus as I can find, then to the one spot in the farthest corner. I point in the general direction of campus squinting to find it on the horizon, for this spot is far from campus.

I tell them to take note of this spot, mark it on their map, for they will wake up a little too late one day, and they will have to park here. All the other spots will be taken. As many as there are, there are not enough, and you will have to park here.

You will arrive to class late, sweaty and tired in body and spirit. You'll ask yourself one of those unanswerable questions, better left for the philosophy department to ponder.

You'll ask yourself why the price of your parking permit increased though you have found no relief from your parking woes.

I catch a taxi back to campus, while the troops hoof it. We meet up at one of the many construction sites on campus, and wonder why the university is landscaping instead of solving problems.

There is something to be said for looking nice, but like Gramps always said, "Wearing a suit to church won't get you into heaven." But enough with this trouble of appearance versus reality. To take on the real issue we have to go to Cope Administration Building.

All we know about this place is that checks come in and out. Apparently they need more checks to come in or fewer to go out. The fellows here answer to the Tennessee Board of Regents, who distribute money from the Tennessee state legislature, who seem to be very confused. All anybody can hope for is that democracy works.

By now the troops are delirious from the heat, and they are sure that I am their Great Blue Leader. I suggest to them that they organize and refer them to books and pamphlets of revolution from the 18th and 19th centuries, when people weren't so complacent and the world seemed less immutable.

The little guys, insane from my ranting and miles of hiking around campus, start foaming at the mouth, smashing things, creating quite a ruckus.

I was, of course, fired for inciting a riot. ♦

Campus Greens: On the front lines against the war on drugs

By Jonathan David Farley
Guest Columnist

I don't know which of you did it, but someone e-mailed me a copy of Lindsey Turner's article in *Sidelines*, the one about financial aid applicants being rejected if they had prior drug convictions, or if they refused to discuss prior drug convictions.

And I was thinking, isn't it ironic that a law like this would be enforced by a man (George W. Bush) who refuses to discuss whether or not he ever used cocaine, and whose predecessor confessed that he smoked pot (albeit without inhaling! Did he take it intravenously?)

I'm not an advocate for the legalization of drugs. I don't even take Advil. And I kicked my Flintstones habit years ago. But I am adamantly opposed to the so-called "War on Drugs," which (like most wars) ravages civilian populations, while leaving those who plan and prosecute the war (the multimillionaires who import the drugs and arms, the politicians looking for election-year bogeymen, and the businessmen who build bigger and bigger prisons) untouched.

Those of you who are as bothered as I am about the "Higher Education Reauthorization Act" should know that there's a new group that is going to fight it with your help. It's called the Campus Greens, and it's coming to MTSU.

The Campus Greens had their founding convention in Chicago in August. It is an autonomous organization working hand-in-glove with the Green Party of the United States. It will focus on repealing the law that punishes college applicants who have already been punished for prior drug use. (Incidentally, the Green Party supports the decriminalization of medical marijuana, although that's not why we're called the Green Party.)

What else does the Green Party support? One of their platform planks is that public education should be free, all the way up

through college. Are you sick of the fact that Dell doesn't have to pay property taxes for 40 years, but your tuition will go up 14%? (To naysayers who think this is pie-in-the-sky, the money to pay for free public education is there. But we spent it on the Adelphia Coliseum.)

Do you know a custodial employee who can't support her family on minimum wage? The Green Party wants a living wage.

Can't afford health insurance, like 43 million other Americans? The Green Party supports universal health insurance.

Tired of the commercialization of education, or maybe you'd like a Pepsi but can only find Coke machines? The Green Party opposes corporate domination. (If Coke wants to monopolize the MTSU market, let them pay for the privilege and sell 12-ounce cans for 35 cents!)

Unlike the Demopublicans, the Green Party doesn't ignore students, or panders to them by playing the sax on MTV. By statute, the Green Party of Tennessee must include students on its 10-person coordinating committee. Right now we have Jenny Paris, a local high school student, and John Knight, a native of Murfreesboro who attends Rhodes College. Richard Call, an undergrad at MTSU, is running the GP's congressional campaign in Tennessee's fifth district. The Green Party is the only mainstream party that takes students seriously.

Don't get me wrong, the Green Party does not have all the answers. We need your help to end corporate welfare, to make public education free and universal health care a reality and to build efficient and inexpensive public transportation.

To find out more, contact Campus Greens coordinator Heather Nelson at www.GreenTN.org. The future of education of the planet is at stake. Don't stay on the sidelines. ♦

Jonathan David Farley, a graduate of Harvard and Oxford, is a mathematics professor at Vanderbilt University.

E-mail letters to
slopinio@mtsu.edu

Letter to the Editor

R. Colin Fly's perceptions way off base

To the Editor:

After reading (R. Colin Fly's) article "Dollars and Sense" from the Aug. 27 issue of *Sidelines*, I have come to the conclusion that he is an idiot. His article was one of the greatest displays of stupidity I have ever come across.

He implied that Brazelton made a bad decision by leaving MTSU's team, who had a winning season last year, to play for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, a professional baseball team. Obviously he does not know anything about sports and has probably never been on an athletic team of any kind. Every athlete's goal is to play their sport at the highest level possible.

If Brazelton decided to stay at MTSU another year, he could have

been injured and probably never would have made it to the pros. Also, there is a possibility that he would not have had as good a season as he had last year, and professional teams might have lost interest. Also, who is he to criticize the Devil Rays?

Every player on that team is better at baseball than he will ever be at anything he does in his life. That is why they have made it to the pros. He can't expect a new team to win the World Series within their first 3 or 4 years of existence.

In conclusion, he is a terrible writer, and he should research the topics he writes about in the future so he doesn't seem so stupid to his readers.

Greg Kuehn

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Get ready to be Hitt Hard

By Erika Pryor
Staff Writer

Three Six Mafia, Eightball & MJG, Hay Stack, Project Pat and Lil Les are just a few of the artists that are launching Tennessee into the top of the R&B and hip hop charts.

All of these artists have brought their own flavor to the music industry, but there are two new hip hop artists that are looking to change the face of rap music.

Marvin Creech, also known as Money Marv, and his partner in crime James Westmoreland "Crisis tha Rhyme Don" are two new faces on the hip hop scene.

These two innovative young men are all about keeping it real and adding flavor to the illusive face of hip hop with their label Hitt Hard.

Creech said that his goal is to "keep it all real, there is no purpose in faking it." Creech and Westmoreland said the one thing that separates them from other artists is lyrical content.

"Most artists talk about things that they don't live," said Westmoreland.

"We are not going to sugar coat it," said Creech.

These young entrepreneurs believe that in order to make a difference in the way hip hop is looked at, they have to speak truth and positively into the ears of their listeners.

"We are not just artists we're consumers too. I know what I want to hear and I'm not hearing it," said Creech.

Creech and Westmoreland understand that the industry is competitive, but they believe that what they have to offer is a new outlook on hip hop culture and are willing to do what it takes to get ahead of the game.

"I had to reposition myself," said Creech. "It's kind of the American dream to run off and be somebody, but due to lack of opportunities out there it has been difficult. It's about being different and putting things in different order. We have to understand some people won't like it."

"The music industry is already versatile, it's all about the beats and hooks. No one pays much attention to lyrics,"

said Westmoreland.

Being the new kids on the block can't be easy but just like in any hood it's all about three things: money, power and respect.

"You have to earn respect," said Westmoreland. "You can only do so much without money. You need money to make an impact. Power is not an issue."

Creech echoes his partner. "Respect will come," he said.

People continually ask Creech what he's going to do with all the money he's going to make.

Creech solemnly replies "I got a few things to take care of."

Both Creech and Westmoreland are adamant about giving back. Both know what it's like to be on the outside looking in.

While on the outside, Creech and Westmoreland had plenty of opportunity to look at the industry not only in Nashville but also in Memphis. Creech said the musical stylings of Memphis rappers are good, but in the same sense they are all about self.

"Memphis should look at the long term," said Creech. "If they did more collaborations with different artists it would be better for the business side of things."

Westmoreland sees it differently. He feels that Memphis has a lot of opportunities for young musicians, but he still has a great deal of faith in Nashville.

"Memphis blew up first, but Nashville is the gumbo of music," he said.

In terms of success, the duo would love to have their music appreciated by millions.

"I'd love for us to crossover. If we have a rainbow crowd we can produce different types of music jazz, country, R&B, not just rap," said Westmoreland.

"We make music for everyone to enjoy. I think Master P said it best 'I just put it down for whoever has 12.99.' I'd love for us to crossover, if it will happen, it'll happen," said Creech.

Whether or not crossing over happens, both Creech and Westmoreland know the media plays an intricate part in the growth and downfall of an

artist.

"The media is almost everything, the strong arm of society. The media tells you what to believe and it happens, you believe it," said Creech.

"The media is huge. It can make you or break you. They can either publicize your best or your worst," said Westmoreland.

Though the men of Hitt Hard realize that success changes people, they have no fear of getting big-headed. They are more than confident about the "change of fame."

"Fame will change you, but when it's all over you want time to yourself. A lot of hard moments come with the job or things won't happen when you want them to. So the next question would be will he ever get the big head?" said Westmoreland.

"No. I will never get the big head. If you ask anyone they would say he's an asshole, but that's the business side only."

"I won't change," Creech said. "I have to be the same. I have been on the outside looking in. I can relate! I'll never change."

Both of these budding young artists, have other options to fall back on. Creech is marketing major here at MTSU.

"You need to know how to pitch your product, also you can use your music to promote other products," he said.

Westmoreland wants to be a cartoon animation voice. He would also like to perform commercials and jingles.

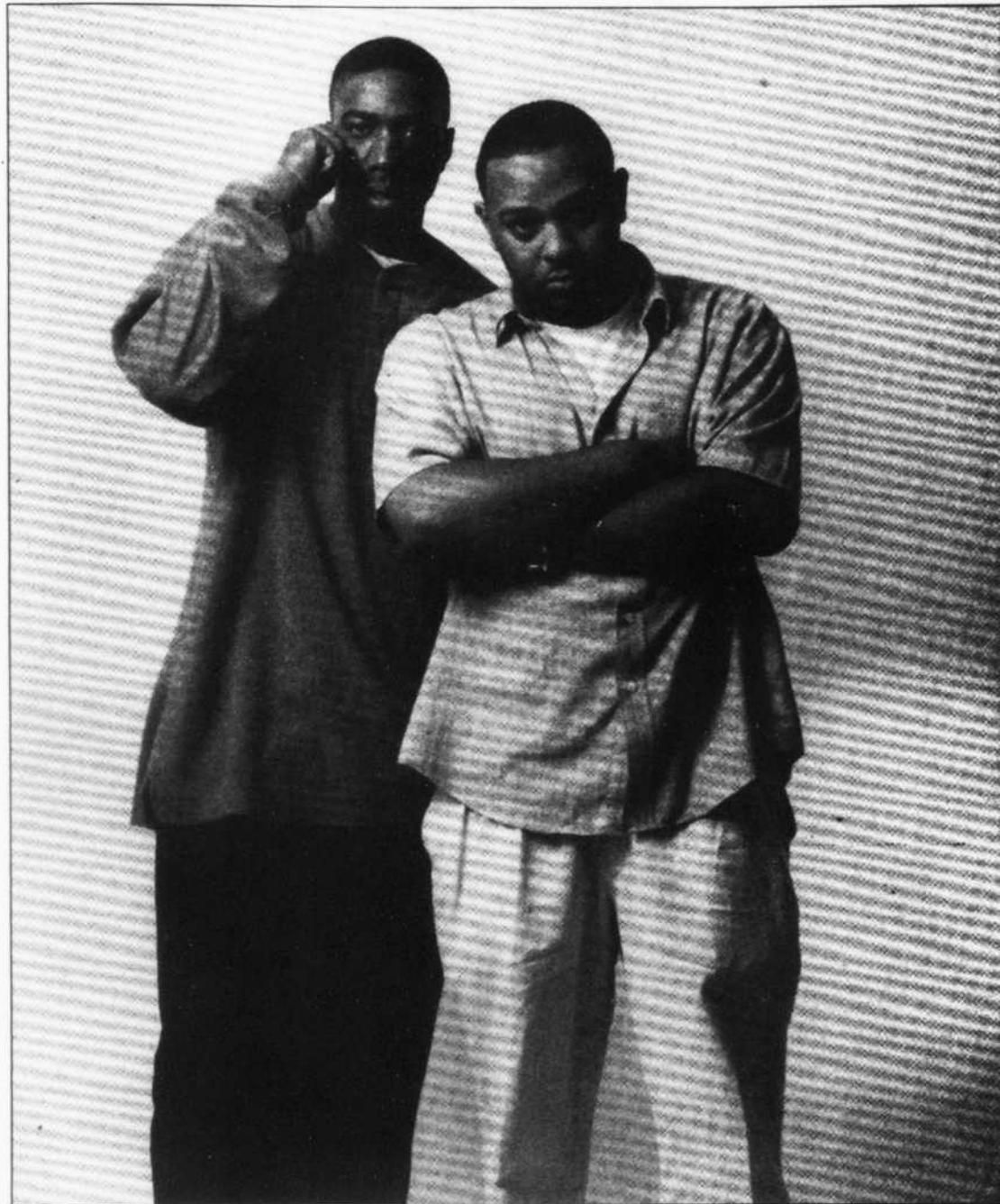
"I want to be able to know that my son is taken care of no matter what happens to me," he said.

The relationship between Creech and Westmoreland has extended into a family. "I have a respect for Crisis and his talent. He is my mentor."

"Creech is like my brother. Without him this would not go down. I wouldn't want to do it with anyone else," Westmoreland said.

Westmoreland is set to release his solo album on Dec. 11, 2001.

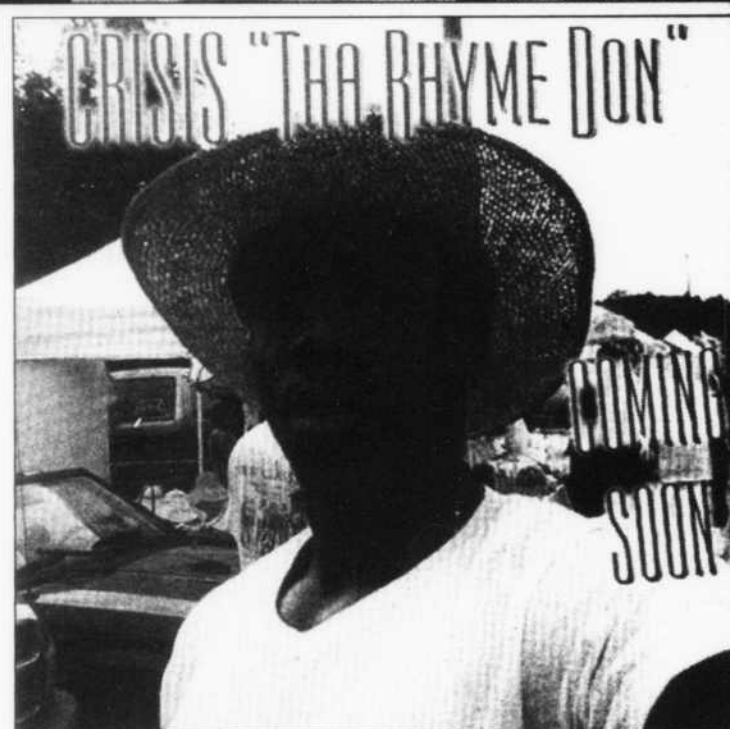
"It's all about me! My everyday life," he said. ♦



Photos provided

Marvin "Money Marv" Creech and James "Crisis" Westmoreland (top) are CEOs and the first artists of Hitt Hard Records. Hitt Hard debuts with "The Appetizer (EP)," which serves as an introduction to the labels artists.

Crisis "Tha Rhyme Don" (right) is anticipating the December release of his solo debut.



There's hope for modern cinema

By Zachary Hansen
Staff Writer

After a summer packed with excessive film viewing, I thought I had lost all faith in the cinematic art form. I had been looking forward to so many movies, almost all of which proved to be anywhere from a little disappointing to disastrous.

Moulin Rouge was extraordinary upon first viewing, but lost most of its spectacular effect the

second time. *A.I.* could have been fabulous, but should have ended about a half-hour earlier than it did. *The Anniversary Party* was pretentious and unoriginal, while the gorgeously shot *The Road Home* was marred by long, boring sequences at the beginning and end.

And as recently as a week ago, both *The Deep End* and *The Curse of the Jade Scorpion* failed to leave lasting impressions on me. Perhaps my viewing of over

100 films this summer made me too difficult to please. But whether that was the reason or not, I thought all hope was lost.

But redemption came to me not once, but twice on Friday.

I had been eagerly anticipating *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* for months, ever since the buzz began at the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year.

Based on my earlier summer experiences, I decided to prepare for the best, while still hoping for the best. And I got better than what I had hoped for.

Hedwig is the most exciting, entertaining and energetic film of the year. Based on John Cameron Mitchell's highly successful Off-Broadway musical, it tells the story of an East German boy named Hansel. He is whisked off to America by a handsome G.I., under the stipulation that he undergoes a sex change. It goes horribly wrong, leaving him with an inch of flesh, forcing his lover to leave and resulting in Hansel's transformation into Hedwig, rock star extraordinaire.

The film follows Hedwig and her band on a tour of shabby seafood restaurants across the country as the follow a competing artist who has stolen her songs. The background behind this travesty is explained in flashbacks, which fit in between

some of the best songs ever contained in a film. Reportedly, the musical numbers were filmed live, resulting in aural sensations that have never been captured on screen quite so perfectly.

Another part of what makes *Hedwig* work so well is that the acting, direction and storytelling are all superior. I have found that in films, even if two of those three elements are perfect, flaws in the third can totally ruin the experience. It is a pleasure to see everything done so well.

The Origin of Love number is a particular standout as it combines the live action performance with animation, which tells the tale contained in the lyrics. Hedwig's stage patter finely balances a biting sense of humor with a tragic sadness.

It has been a long time since I have seen a film so constantly hilarious yet as moving as *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. I cannot wait to see it again, and it is by far the best film I have seen this year.

Wait a minute! I take that back! *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* is the second best film I have seen this year. You see, immediately after seeing it, I saw *Ghost World*. It is Terry Zwigoff's follow-up to the classic documentary, *Crumb*, about the underground cartoonist

and his misfit brothers.

Upon hearing about the new film, I was inspired to take read the comic books by Daniel Clowes that *Ghost World* is based upon, and was immediately taken into the lives of recent high-school graduates Enid and Rebecca.

The two girls are best friends; both fed up with the world around them and the voice this displeasure by sarcastically commenting on the people and things that surround them. They use this technique as a cover-up for the fact that neither of them really has any direction in life, especially Enid.

Although they both know that college is not for them, only Rebecca takes control of her future by getting a job and searching for an apartment for the two of them. On the other hand, Enid spends most of her time changing clothing styles and feeling sorry for herself. The story wisely concentrates on her and her inability to find herself.

Amidst all of their inactivity, the two of them find time to play a horrible joke on a lonely middle-aged man named Seymour, who finds his only solace and friendship in the vintage knick knacks and old blues records that he collects. Enid inadvertently encounters Seymour again at a yard sale,

and is instantly intrigued by his lonely lifestyle. The two become close friends, and Enid even tried to play matchmaker for him, although she secretly would like him for herself.

The most important facet of *Ghost World* that makes it so appealing is the cast of characters. All of the main characters are given enough time to develop their own distinct personality. Even the minor people that Enid and Rebecca encounter are memorable in their minimal screen time. I enjoyed the fact that Zwigoff was fairly faithful to the book as far as including people such as Norman, Weird Al and the Satanists. All of the actors turn in outstanding performances, especially Thora Birch as Enid and Steve Buscemi as Seymour. They both effectively convey the loneliness and individuality of their characters, which also makes them extraordinarily identifiable.

So *Ghost World* is the best movie of the year. Honestly, I really hope a better film doesn't come along this year, and I don't think one will for a long time. Films as original and entertaining as *Ghost World* and *Hedwig* don't come along very often, so go see them over and over again and realize that there is still hope for modern cinema after all. ♦



Photo provided

Hedwig and the Angry Inch is about a German boy who moves to America, undergoes a sex change and becomes a rock star.

Janet's tour postponed for health problems

By Luke Burke
Staff Writer

A respiratory infection derailed Janet Jackson's "All For You" tour last week. Several concerts have been postponed, and some even canceled, since the tour began in July due to the performer's health problems.

Jackson says she regrets inconveniencing her fans, but she feels its time to follow the advice of her doctors and not her heart so she can make a full

recovery.

Jackson is scheduled to perform at Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Jordan working on return

Thirty-eight-year-old Michael Jordan's performance on the court may not be what it used to be. Players invited to Jordan's comeback camp were asked to take a vow of silence, yet some players still made

comments about his performance. One player stated that Jordan was "all right" while another said he was like "garbage." Jordan rates himself as a six on a scale of one to 10. Jordan has not confirmed if he is returning to the NBA at this time.

Mariah anticipates return

After about a month of seclusion, Mariah Carey thanks her fans for their support on

her Web site and says she is taking care of herself as she looks forward to promoting her new film *Glitter*.

The film was set to open in August but was pushed to a September opening after Carey's strange behavior and hospitalization. Last month the star handed out popsicles and rambled about rainbows on MTV's *Total Request Live*.

After an incident of breaking dishes, her mother called 911 to take her to the hospital.

The film is Carey's first starring role.

TSU student auditions for NBC's new reality series, 'Lost'

Who says there's no reality in reality TV? Lando, a 24 year-old student at Tennessee State University, is a real world example. Lando, a waiter in downtown Nashville, is one of 6,000 who auditioned for the new NBC reality show *Lost*.

The producers then nar-

rowed the potential players to 70 and finally 36 finalists. Each player took a psychological test, a physical exam, inoculations and final interviews with producers until 12 players were chosen.

Lost is a global race where contestants are taken to an unknown place and forced to find their way to the Statue of Liberty first with limited resources. *Lost* premieres tonight at 7 p.m. ♦

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KUC 322

Wednesday, September 5

5:00 - 6:00pm

KUC 322

Organization presidents must attend one session to be registered as a campus organization with the Office of Student Organizations and Community Service.

For more info: call 904-8418 or come by KUC 306

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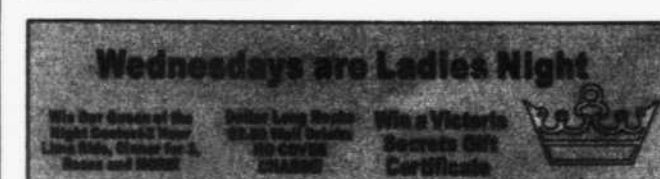
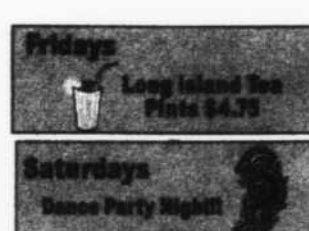
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Media blitz



R. Colin Fly Senior Staff Writer

Any way you cut it, MT is a winner

Same old Vandy, brand new MT.

The magic number for this column is 12 (read on).

As a columnist and writer at *Sidelines*, I've dealt with the Middle Tennessee State sports scene for four years. I've watched the programs grow from infancy (like soccer and this year's women's golf) to adulthood (football to I-A, the track team, if I could ever catch them). I also think that at times I get a bad reputation for doing my job. For example, a certain story that broke at the end of last year and I followed up to begin this year.

I've got people who consistently call me stupid, an idiot and many words that I can't publish, but would make a sailor blush. I even had one reader write in to tell me I'd never play professional baseball after my column about the Tampa Bay Devil Rays (Aug. 27). For the record, I fired my agent, Scott Boras, last week and have officially decided that the only way I'll play professional baseball is to extend my writing career into that realm, a la Garth Brooks and Michael Jordan. So maybe the Birmingham Barons would take me in 10 years. (Note: Do the Barons still exist?)

All of the following events are true . . . sort of.

First off, I have been harsh about many aspects of sports at Middle. I remember writing a column saying that maybe we shouldn't move to Division I in football. I did it as more of a devil's advocate piece, but the readership had no clue of that.

As for doing my job, I have one Middle Tennessee football jersey that hangs in my room that I'll occasionally wear. I bought it last season because I wanted to show my blue on road games when I wasn't in the press box. I didn't buy a Hicks 33, Calico 27 or a Counts 17. I bought - and proudly wear - a 12.

And No. 12 was incredible last week. Newson hauled in nine passes and took a vicious hit, yet his heart and tenacity kept him in the game and showed the Middle Tennessee community why he deserves to play on Sundays.

But praising just one player on the offense wouldn't be right. Between Counts, Johnson, the talented receivers (I wouldn't want to leave anyone out) and the running core, including the new weapon, Resherd Lee, Middle is the most fun team I've ever watched week in and out. They almost remind me of when I was 12 and Warren Moon was scattering the field and using the run-and-shoot offense with no huddle.

Middle Tennessee has smart, fast athletes, which will only be enhanced by the turf and the Sun Belt Conference opponents. And the defense has stepped up in the last year and a half since the Florida game. After talking to defensive tackle Jerry Vanderpool after the Vanderbilt game, the team truly believes in themselves as a family that will win every game. If they won every game and the bowl, they'd be 12-0.

Speaking of Vanderbilt, *The Daily News Journal* and *The Tennessean* had 12 articles about the game combined last Friday.

And that all comes back to coach McCollum, who has been the rock that this team is built around. No one believes as much as he does and no one is down on himself more when they lose (which has been just twice in the last nine games). I

See Blitz, 8

'Dores' slam shut

Performance and execution answer questions

By J.P. Plant
Senior Sports Editor

The Middle Tennessee football team had several questions heading into the 2001 season opener at Vanderbilt - Could the offensive line compete after losing four starters to graduation? Was Dwone Hicks' record setting season a fluke? Could the defense improve into a respectable unit? And could Wes Counts lead this team to a Sun Belt Championship? To answer - yes, no, better - still needs improvement, and looks promising so far.

While the offense, as a unit, remained fairly intact and without speculation of performance heading into the 2001 season, the rest of the team was - 'well, we'll just have to wait and see.'

Performance and execution were cornerstones to Middle's 37-28 win over Vandy Thursday night in Nashville. And head coach Andy McCollum found answers to the questions he had pondered

during the off-season.

Question #1: Could the offensive line compete after losing four starters to graduation? Answer: YES!

"Coming into the game our offensive line was a question mark," McCollum said, "and coming out of the game our offensive MVP was Glen Elarbee. He did a great job and graded out well. For a unit that had question marks I thought they played extremely well."

Extremely well to McCollum calculates into 300 yards rushing, with the longest being a 33-yard scamper by junior tailback Dwone Hicks. In other words, the offensive line for Middle controlled the line of scrimmage allowing Hicks to pick up chunks of yardage running downfield.

"(Our offensive line) was a question mark until we proved we could do the job," offensive lineman Glen Elarbee said. "We've come a long way since the beginning of fall camp. At the beginning guys were getting moved around and it took a few

days for things to settle down. But once we started practicing together, things just came together and we started playing well."

The hard work didn't go undetected as Hicks, like any good running back, praised his offensive line.

"The offensive line worked really hard in the summer and during fall camp," Hicks said. "They worked harder than anyone else and it showed."

"Our whole group is really close friends," Elarbee added. "We've been in the offense for a couple of years and know how each other thinks. It was just our turn to step up and show what we could do."

Question #2: Was Dwone Hicks' record setting season a fluke? Answer: NO!

The roll that Doak Walker candidate Hicks was on last season is still rolling down hill and picking up steam. 203 yards on 37 carries with four touchdowns doesn't just happen, or does it?

"I just wanted to run hard

and set a tone for the season," Hicks said, "and a good game just came out of that."

"That's Dwone," McCollum said on his tailback's performance. "Dwone has been waiting [for this season]. He's heard all about the two or three backs we've got as well, and he's just a humble kid that doesn't say much. He puts his work in. I could see in his eyes saying 'don't forget about me'. He wants the ball and is a work horse. And he is as humble right now as he was two years ago."

"Maybe he has a chip on his shoulder," senior quarterback Wes Counts said of Hicks after the game. Counts added that "he has something to prove to the 'big schools' that didn't take him out of high school. He wants to prove he belongs."

Question #3: Could the defense improve into a respectable unit? Answer: Better - still needs improvement

"I couldn't be more proud of what our defense did the sec-

ond half [vs. Vandy]," McCollum said. After giving up three 'stupid plays' in the first half, McCollum told them in the locker room 'we just played about as bad as we could play and are only down by four. So what does that tell you if we come out in the second half and just do your job the best you can, then we'll give ourselves a chance,' McCollum said, "and our defense did that."

It was the tale of two halves for the Blue Raider defense. Vandy gained 338 yards in the first half while scoring 28 points, good enough for a four point lead going into the locker room. But after McCollum's pep talk at the half, the Blue Raiders only gave up 109 yards and zero points.

The bottom line is Vandy didn't score in the second half. But if you read between the hash marks, you'll find that Vanderbilt's Nezih Hasanoglu dropped a pass early in the fourth quarter that would have been a sure touchdown to give

See Performance, 9

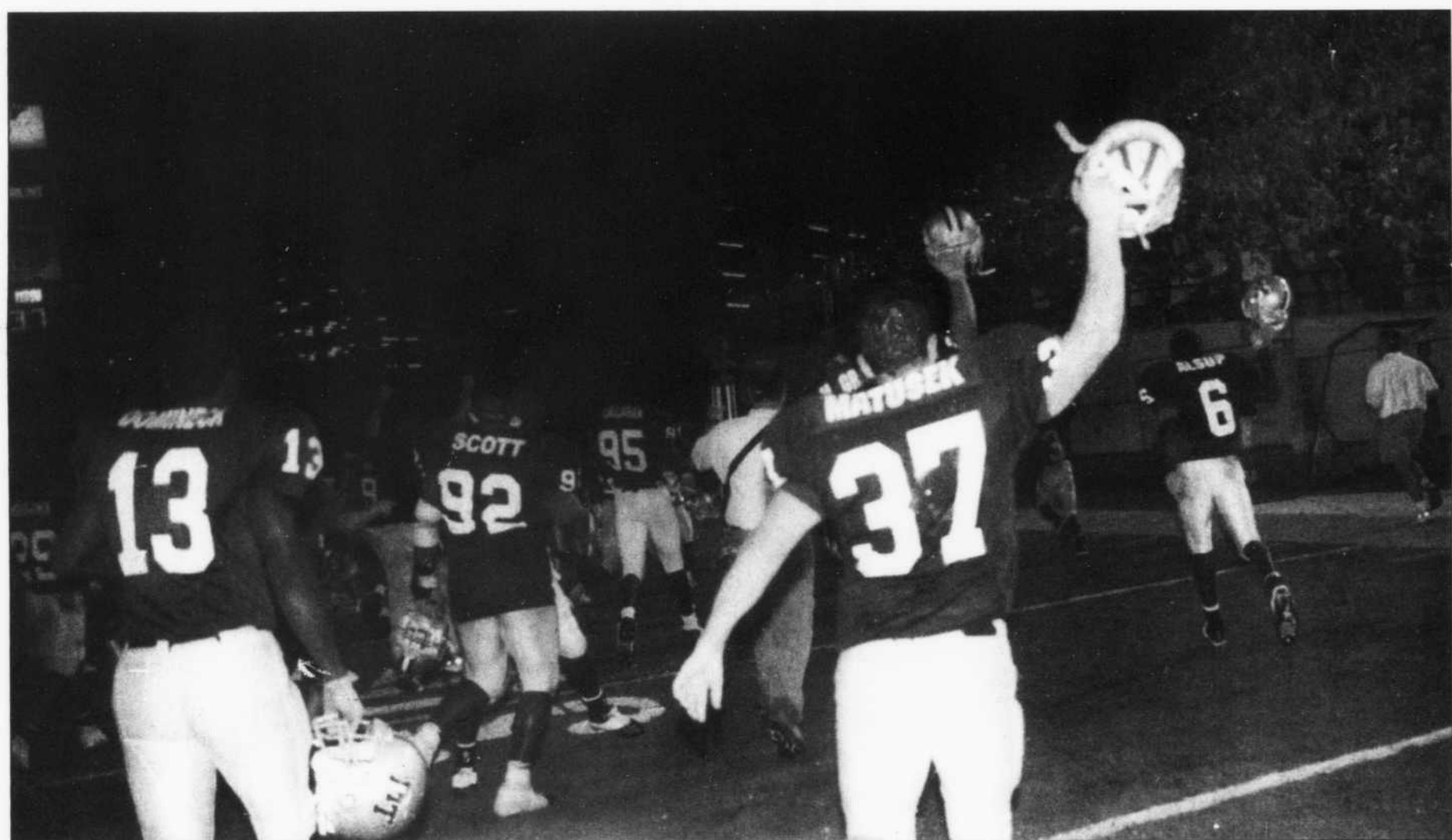


Photo by Matthew H. Starling | Photo Editor

Blue Raiders salute to their fans following the win at Vanderbilt. The 'Big Blue' faithful accounted for almost half of the 39,000-plus in attendance.

'Big blue' takes over Nashville

Colleen Cox
Sports Editor

The Middle Tennessee football team pulled out its biggest win in recent history Thursday night with a 37-28 victory over Vanderbilt in Nashville.

Thursday's game brought long-sought support for the Blue Raiders. The crowd at the game was 39,885, the largest non-conference crowd at Vanderbilt since Notre Dame visited in September 1996. But, nearly half of the stadium was filled with blue.

"Our fans were the difference in the game," head coach Andy McCollum said. "We came out and saw all of the blue in the stands and they were there at 6 p.m. to cheer us onto the field."

"The campus really needed more school spirit when I got here," running back Dwone Hicks said. "Everyone was worried about going to see UT or TSU play. But now the focus seems to be more on MT football. Coming home from the game, you could really see the spirit. A lot of people were beeping their horns."

Middle Tennessee ran the no-huddle offense for most of

the game. The quick offense gave Vandy a hard time all night.

"They were moving the ball real quick," said Vanderbilt nose tackle Brett Beard on Saturday's *The Tennessean*. "That no-huddle thing kinda threw us off. They were going a lot quicker than we thought they would. We worked on it in practice, but it showed Thursday night that we weren't ready."

Middle's quick offense came out hot and got things started on its second possession. Dwone Hicks started things off rushing to the right for six yards. After an incomplete pass, Hicks went up the middle for another nine yards and Middle's first first down of the evening.

Wes Counts then completed a 19-yard pass to Tyrone Calico putting Middle Tennessee at the Vandy 43-yard line. That was followed by a pass to Kendall Newson for nine yards. Calico ran a slant pattern and caught another pass but coughed it up. Aaron McWhorter saved the drive by recovering the fumble for Middle at the 4-yard line of Vanderbilt.

The rest was left up to Hicks. He used two carries to put the ball in the endzone for a 6-0

Blue Raider lead with 5:48 to go in the first quarter. Brian Kelly's extra point was good.

The Middle Tennessee defense held Vanderbilt's offense to a three-and-out and forced them to punt.

Handsford Johnson ran the punt back 74 yards, but the return was called back due to an illegal block in the back penalty. The penalty put Middle back on its own 26-yard line.

The bad field position didn't deter the offense. It quickly changed that bad field position with a 20-yard reverse to Kerry Wright. Hicks then carried the ball twice for 16 yards. Former high school quarterback and Middle Tennessee running back Resherd Lee lined up at quarterback for the Blue Raiders and ran the ball for another 17 yards.

Counts then hooked up with Newson for 10 yards putting Middle at the Vanderbilt 6-yard line. Hicks once again took the ball in for six. Brian Kelly added the extra point to give Middle a 14-0 advantage.

With 1:05 left in the first quarter, the Vanderbilt offense started rolling. Ronald Hatcher took the kickoff 38 yards to give Vandy nice field position.

Greg Zolman hit M.J. Garrett on two big pass plays, one for 13 yards and the other for 34 yards to end the first quarter.

Rodney Williams opened the second quarter with two carries for 11 yards and a touchdown. Chuck Folino's extra point was good cutting Middle's lead to 14-7.

Despite starting at its own 1-yard line, Middle looked to have another scoring drive going after the ensuing kickoff. However, Newson fumbled the ball and Nate Morrow recovered it for Vandy.

Vanderbilt quickly took advantage of the turnover driving the ball 84 yards on six plays to tie the score at 14.

Middle Tennessee answered on its next possession going 66 yards on eight plays for a field goal and a 17-14 lead.

The Vanderbilt offense came back once again as Zolman hit Dan Stricker on a 48-yard pass play for a touchdown and a 21-17 lead.

Middle's offense answered once again. Muhammad Rashada took the kickoff 24 yards to set up the drive. Hicks followed with a 6 yard rush. David Youell caught two

straight passes, the first for 15 yards and the second for 4 yards, from Counts.

Counts hit Calico on an eight yard strike. Vandy was whistled for a 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty after the catch. Counts completed yet another pass to Newson, and Vandy was whistled for another unsportsmanlike penalty. Hicks took over from there rushing the ball twice and punching it into the endzone for a 24-21 Middle Tennessee advantage.

"I think there was some frustration out there," Vandy coach Woody Widenhofer said about the unsportsmanlike penalties. "We worked hard in the off-season on leadership and discipline. We don't condone them and you can't do that. You have to keep your poise and not get involved in anything like that."

The Vanderbilt offense recovered to put together one more drive before halftime. Zolman threw a 73-yard bomb to M.J. Garrett to give Vandy a 28-24 halftime lead.

At halftime, coach McCollum told his team, "Fellows we just played as bad as we could play and we're only down by four, so what does that

See Middle wins, 8

Notebook from the sidelines

Shane Marquardt

The Blue Raiders return home with an avalanche of momentum that could bury the Trojans of Troy State.

MTSU is looking to avenge a loss to the Trojans from their 1999 meeting in Floyd Stadium. TSU made the Raiders endure a 48-31 insult at home, and adding injury to insult, it was in the Big Blue's inaugural year of Division IA football. The Raiders will bring a six game home winning streak and a ugly chip on their shoulders this time around.

The Blue Collar Workers: The offensive line won the battle up front last week against Vanderbilt, opening lanes that the Blue Raiders filled with heavy traffic in route to 300 rushing yards. The line also provided quarterback Wes Counts ample time to throw the football as he collected 308 yards in the air. The last time Counts threw for that many—Troy State in 1999. In proving how important the men in the trenches are, offensive lineman Glen Elarbee was named offensive MVP in a game where the Raiders went for 608 total yards, the teams second-highest total yardage of all time.

Big D: Stepped to the forefront against Vanderbilt last week when they blanked the Commodores in the second half, allowing the offense to run away with the game. Cornerback Jykine Bradley had six tackles and was subsequently named Sun Belt Defensive Player of the Week. Linebacker Michael Woods patrolled the line of scrimmage and made a name for himself against the Commodores, collecting six tackles and being named MTSU's defensive player of the week. Bradley and Woods are presently the Blue Raiders' leading tacklers.

All-American Watch: Last time MTSU and TSU met, Dwone Hicks was playing the fullback position. Troy State should expect his role to be quite different in this altercation, especially after Hicks wet his appetite with 203 rushing yards against Vanderbilt. MTSU is now 6-0 when Hicks receives 18 opportunities to run with the football. Wide receiver Kendall Newson comes home with a streak of 33 straight games in which he has made a reception. With the Blue Raiders' high volatile passing attack, the streak doesn't look to end anytime soon. ♦

Middle Wins: Hicks rushes for 203 yards and 4 TDs

Continued from 7

tell you if we come out in the second half and just do your job the best you can do it, then we'll give ourselves a chance."

The defense responded to McCollum's challenge by shutting down the Vandy offense in the second half. Vanderbilt had plenty of chances but nine dropped passes killed the effort.

"We made a lot of mistakes in the first half and had some missed assignments," defensive end Tanaka Scott said. "We have to have everyone stay on the same page. We can't have 10 guys on page one and the other guy on page three. At halftime we went in and put our thinking caps on and stepped it up a notch in the second half."

The offense responded as well. With 11:07 left in the third quarter, Middle started another scoring drive. Hicks rushed seven times including scoring the touchdown and Counts completed five passes to four different receivers in the 16 play, 80 yard, go-ahead drive.

With Middle leading 30-28 early in the fourth quarter, Vanderbilt had a perfect opportunity to take the lead. Zolman and Garrett connected on a 47-yard pass that gave Vanderbilt first and goal from the 10. Nezih Hasanoglu dropped a potential touchdown pass in the endzone on third down. Things fell apart from that point for

Vandy as the snap on the attempted field goal was fumbled and Middle took over.

"That was a touchdown," Hasanoglu said in Saturday's *The Tennessean*. "It was a ball I should have caught. It was just a drop. The game wasn't on that one pass, but it was a big play, a play I've made in the past and should have made."

Vandy had one last chance with 4:03 left in the game. Widenhofer chose to go for it on fourth-and-2 at midfield. The Middle Tennessee defense came up with the huge stop, and Middle took over.

Counts sealed the win with :21 to go as he scampered in for the touchdown.

"I really thought we'd kick a field goal, but taking the chance of blocking the kick and them returning it back," Counts said explaining the team strategy on his touchdown run. "We also thought about just running around back there, taking the snap and just running back and forth trying not to lose to much yardage take off 15, 20 seconds."

"This is one of the toughest losses I've ever been involved in," Widenhofer said after the game. "I know the team feels terrible. We let a lot of fans down tonight."

Middle Tennessee racked up 608 yards of total offense. Hicks rushed for 203 yards on 37 carries including four touchdowns. Counts completed 27-of-36 passes for 308 yards. Newson had nine catches for 113

yards.

"I expected to give up some yardage," Widenhofer said. "What I didn't want to do was go out there and give up some big plays."

"If you tackle guys, those are five and six yard gains and you really don't think some one will have that patience to stay with that," Widenhofer said referring to his teams 25 missed tackles.

One of the big factors in Middle's 608 yards of offense was the offensive line.

"[Our offensive line] was a question mark until we proved we could do the job last week," said offensive lineman Glen Elarbee. "We still have a lot to prove. We knew if we could keep the tempo quick [against Vanderbilt] we had a chance to make big plays. We wanted to put body-on-body and be where we needed to be."

"Coming into the game our offensive line was a question mark and coming out of the game our offensive MVP was Glen Elarbee," McCollum said. "He did a great job and graded out well. For a unit that had question marks I thought they played extremely well."

Middle Tennessee's next game is Saturday at 6 p.m. against Troy State. ♦



Photo by Matthew H. Starling | Photo Editor

Sophomore tailback Dwone Hicks breaks one of many tacklers as he rushes for 203 yards against Vanderbilt.

Blitz: MT blessed with speed

Continued from 7

would love to see him stay at Middle Tennessee for the rest of his career. My pessimistic side knows that isn't likely the case. So, Blue Raider fans, the 12th man according to the coaching staff and players, need to savor every moment that he walks the sideline. He'll go for victory 11, as a revenge for a defeat two years ago. If MT wins, then he could win his 12th game as head coach in the Sun Belt Conference opener at Louisiana at Monroe three Saturdays from now. Speaking of conferences, after this weekend's game,

maybe it's time for the powers to be (read McPhee and interim AD Boots Donnelly) to revisit an idea by former MT presidential candidate Barbara Haskew. In her interview, she said that maybe MT should think about moving to Conference USA. Last season, we lost to C-USA member UAB, 14-9, in a game that McCollum was thoroughly frustrated with and defeated future C-USA member South Florida, 45-9. USF officially joins the C-USA in football in 2003, which if we were to join then, would increase the league's membership for football to... you guessed it... 12. ♦

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SIGNATURE

Performance: Counts leads MT to victory

Continued from 7

Vanderbilt the lead. And on the same drive, holder Justin Perky bobbled the snap and the go-ahead field goal attempt wasn't attempted.

But perhaps the biggest play for Middle on defense came later in the fourth quarter when Vandy went for it on a fourth and two from midfield. Middle's defensive line stuffed the line of scrimmage and quarterback Greg Zoleman. That stop gave Middle the ball which led the final score - a nine yard quarterback keeper by Wes Counts.

Question #4: And could Wes Counts lead this team to a Sun Belt Championship? Answer: Looks promising so far

"I knew their quarterback was good," Vanderbilt head coach Woody Widenhofer said, "but I didn't expect him to

play that good. He didn't make a mistake in 88 snaps. That's pretty good. Counts made every play he could make, and made every read he could make and he an incredible game making decisions and protecting the ball."

The numbers for the fifth-year senior quarterback were 27-of-36 for 308 yards. But the leadership is what people were talking about after the game.

"Wes played and outstanding game," McCollum said, "and I couldn't be more proud the way he handled this football team."

Not only did he throw for 308 yards, he ran six times for 18 yards. But the last nine Counts ran on a fourth and goal slammed the 'Dores shut.

"I really thought we'd kick a field goal," Counts said. "And we also thought about just snapping the ball and running

back forth to take seconds off the clock. But coach (Boots) Donnelly and coach (Joe) Wickline got together and decided that the bootleg was the right thing to do - we had had it most of the night if we'd wanted it....It was a heck of a call, and luckily they [Vanderbilt] were in the right defense for us to work against it."

Counts entered this season battling for the starting position at quarterback with fellow senior Jason Johnson. Counts currently is third all-time among Middle Tennessee quarterbacks in attempts, second in completions and has the best career completion percentage at 65.0 percent. ♦



Photo by Matthew H. Starling | Photo Editor

Wes Counts (17) stands in shotgun formation during the Blue Raiders win over Vanderbilt Thursday night. Counts threw for 308 yards connecting on 27-of-36 passes and no interceptions. Counts also ran for 18 yards, nine of which came on a fourth and goal from the Vanderbilt nine. Counts ran a bootleg to his left and went in for the touchdown to seal the victory for Middle Tennessee. The 37-28 win marks the first win over a South Eastern Conference opponent.

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