

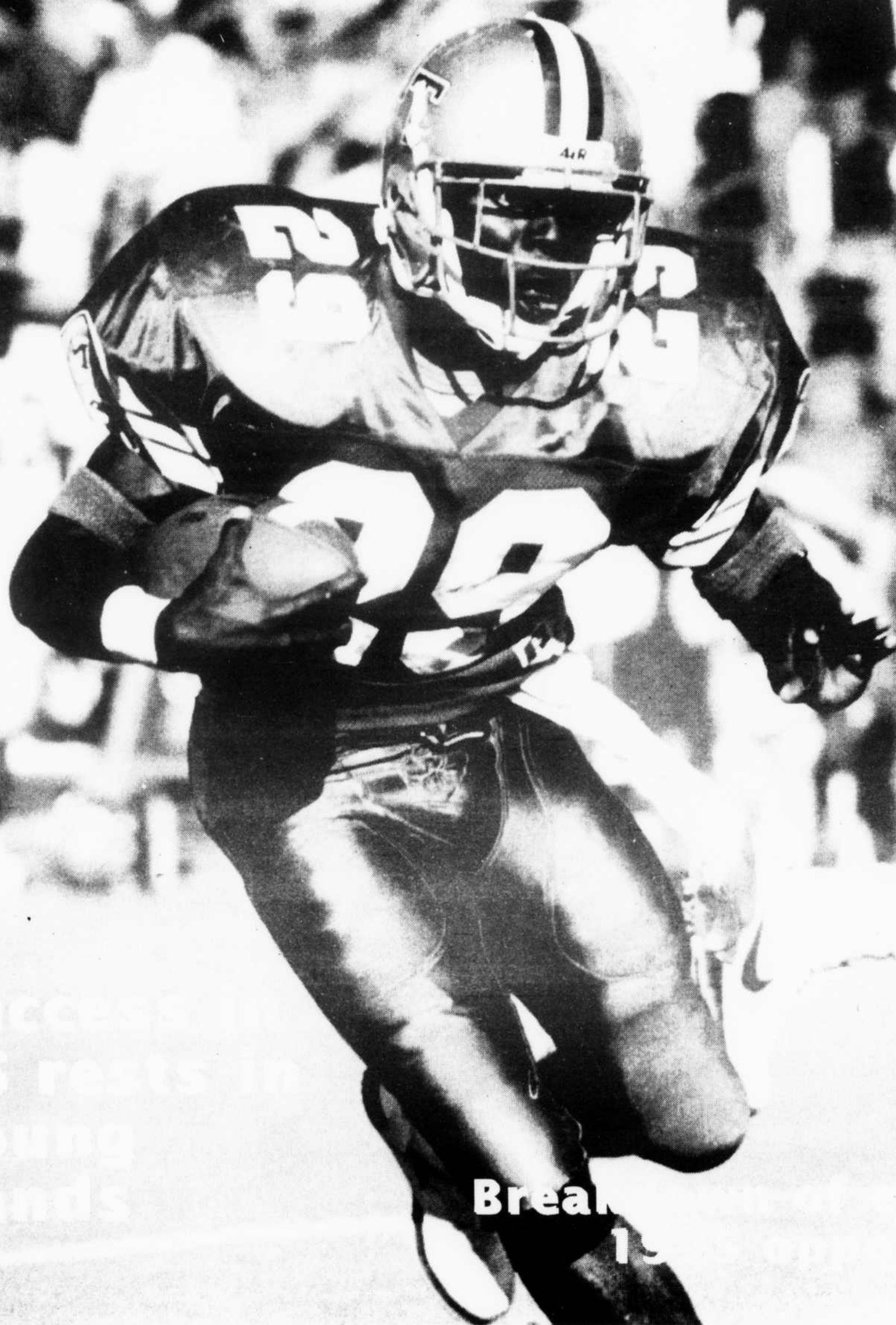
Middle Tennessee State University

# SIDELINES

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Fall 1995

## 1995 Football Preview



Success in  
95 rests in  
young  
hands

Breakdown of the  
1995 season

# Blue Raider coach expecting tough season

Young, inexperienced team has Donnelly worrying

By RYAN LEWIS/staff

Blue Raider head coach Boots Donnelly has many questions about his team and the 1995 season in general that he would like to have answered. Unfortunately, those answers will only come to him in the weeks ahead.

Youth and inexperience dominate both sides of the ball on a team that hopes to improve on an 8-3-1 regular season performance and playoff appearance turned in by the '94 squad.

"This year is going to be a tough one, and I say that as honestly and as sincere as I possibly can," said Donnelly. "Until we can gain some knowledge and experience in game action, it's going to be tough."

MTSU will start 13 new players that have never started before. Four of those have never even stepped onto the field for a college football game.

Needless to say, Donnelly is a little worried.

"I've got players playing that I don't even know who they are," he admitted. "I'm not being facetious. That's the truth."

The big question on everyone's mind offensively is the quarterback position. Particularly, who is the quarterback going to be?

Will it be Tulane transfer Jonathan Quinn or red shirt freshman Shelby Parker?

"We're going to start a new quarterback, and at this stage, I have no idea who that is going to be," allowed Donnelly. "We'll pick one sometime because we have to — the rules make us."

Defensively, the front seven seems to have all the ingredients to become great in the new 4-3 defense under the direction of first year defensive coordinator Todd Tanney.

Does Donnelly like the idea of running the 4-3 this year?

No.

However, he admits that it is the best thing for the team right now.

"We've got a new defensive coordinator this year. I think he is going to do a great job," he said of Tanney. "I think he did it in the spring. I think he's doing it in the fall. We'll just see what happens."

The looming question for the defense is the secondary

**"If we can get these guys... to play with total abandon and wide open enthusiasm, then we can overcome a tremendous lack of experience."**

**Boots Donnelly**  
MTSU football coach

where MTSU will start four players that will line up for the first time in game action.

Richard Widener, a converted receiver, and Antonio Smith will start at the cornerback positions. William Henley and true freshman Gary Barnes will get the call at free safety and strong safety, respectively.

"It's always fun and exciting when you've got experienced players coming back," commented Donnelly. "It's not near as fun and not near as exciting when you've got a bunch of young guys who have never lined up and gotten a chance to prove that they can win. That's the shape we're in."

Despite the immaturity of the team, Donnelly still sees a chance for them to be just as successful, if not more, than last year's team. He sees several factors that should play major roles in MTSU's 1995 prosperity.

"If we can get these guys to not worry about a mistake, because they're going to make a lot, and yet, to play with nothing but total abandon and wide open enthusiasm, then we can overcome a tremendous amount of a lack of experience," he said. "If we make mistakes and whine and cry because we feel sorry for ourselves, then we don't have a chance."

Another key for the team will be the emergence of a leader at quarterback. To the head coach, this will be a must during the season.

"He doesn't have to throw



Bill Meehan/Special to Sidelines

it great. He doesn't have to run great. He doesn't have to look good in a uniform," Donnelly related. "He has to be able to put the other 10 guys in the right position. That's just the name of the game."

As for any team, remaining healthy throughout the season will play a vital role in determining the success of the 1995 season. The Blue Raiders are extremely thin in depth at several positions, so a rash of injuries could be catastrophic.

"We're healthy right now. We do have a chance — it's slim to none, but we have a chance," laughed Donnelly. "So, that's about where we are. It's time to play." ●



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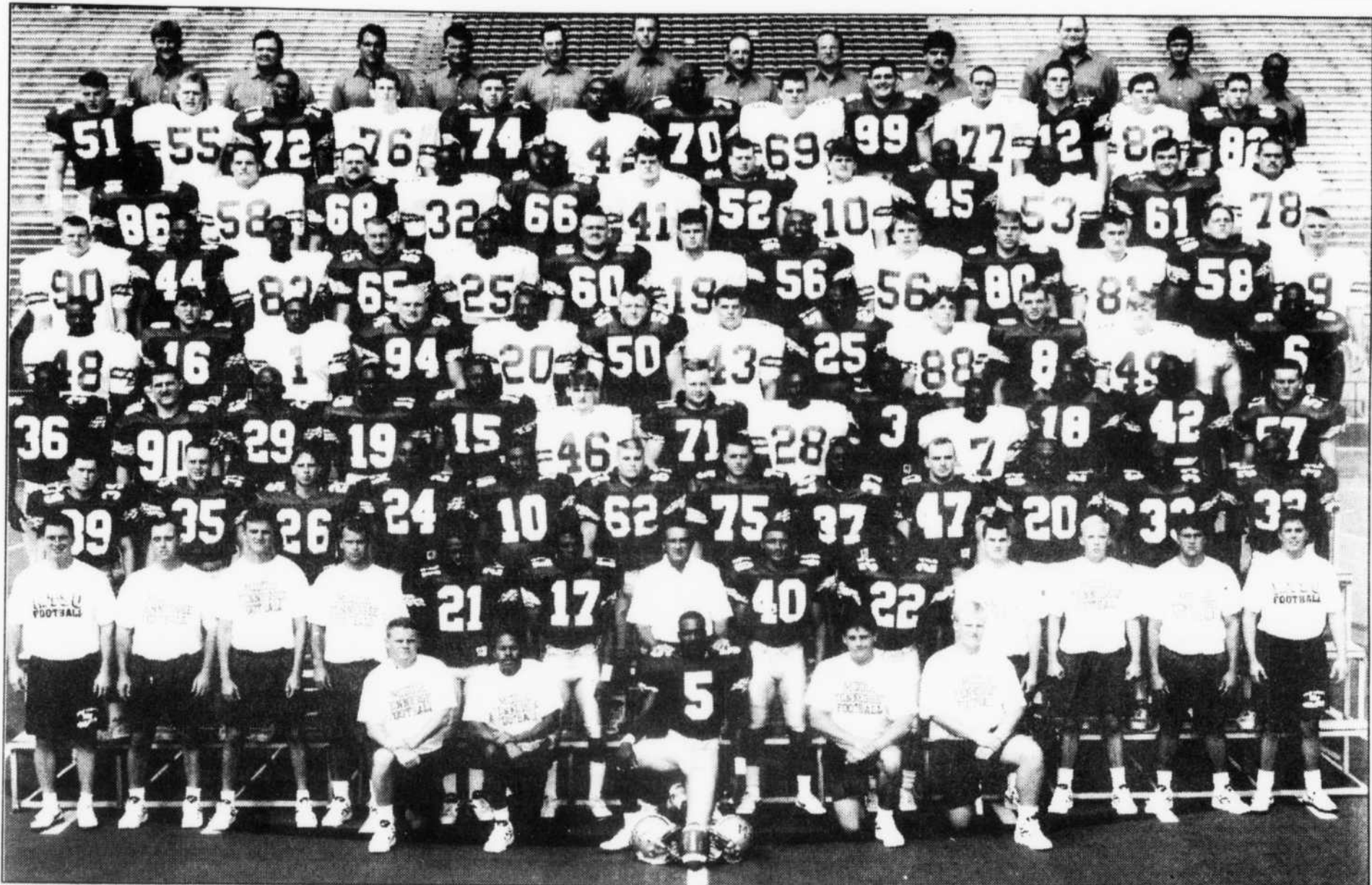
## OVC PRESEASON PREDICTIONS

1. **EASTERN KENTUCKY**
2. **MIDDLE TENNESSEE**
3. **TENNESSEE STATE**
4. **TENNESSEE TECH**
5. **SOUTHEAST MISSOURI**
6. **AUSTIN PEAY**
7. **MURRAY STATE**
8. **UT-MARTIN**



Bill Meehan/Special to Sidelines

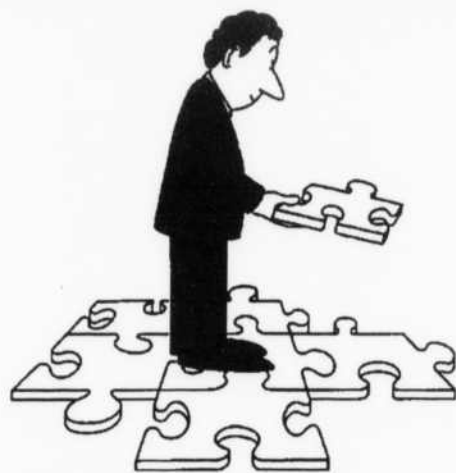




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# The 1995 MTSU Blue Raiders

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# Ohio Valley Conference Outlook

Austin Peay  
Clarksville, Tenn.



Nickname: Governors

1994 Record:  
Overall 4-7-0  
OVC 3-5-0 (6th, Tie)

Head Coach:  
Roy Gregory  
Record: Overall 13-31-0

Overall Series:  
MTSU leads 35-12-2

Returning Leaders:  
Jacob Dickson, RB  
Daniel Williams, QB

October 7, 2:00 p.m.  
Municipal Stadium  
Clarksville, Tenn.

Eastern Kentucky  
Richmond, Ky.



Nickname: Colonels

1994 Record:  
Overall 10-3-0  
OVC 8-0-0 (1st)

Head Coach:  
Roy Kidd  
Record: Overall 257-91-8

Overall Series:  
EKU leads 15-8-0

Returning Leaders:  
William Murrell, RB  
Robert Bouldin, RB

October 14, 6:00 p.m.  
Hanger Field  
Richmond, Ky.

Morehead State  
Morehead, Ky.



Nickname: Eagles

1994 Record:  
Overall 0-11-0  
OVC 0-8-0 (9th)

Head Coach:  
Matt Ballard  
Record: Overall 35-36-1

Overall Series:  
MTSU leads 36-8-1

Returning Leaders:  
J. P. Blair, QB  
Cliff Freeman, DB

October 7, 2:00 p.m.  
Municipal Stadium  
Clarksville, Tenn.

Murray State  
Murray, Ky.



Nickname: Racers

1994 Record:  
Overall 5-6-0  
OVC 4-4-0 (4th, Tie)

Head Coach:  
Houston Nutt  
Record: Overall 9-13-0

Overall Series:  
MTSU leads 35-27-3

Returning Leaders:  
Benji Bona, QB  
David McCann, FB

September 23  
7:00 p.m.  
Jones Field,  
Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Tennessee Tech  
Cookeville, Tenn.



Nickname: Golden Eagles

1994 Record:  
Overall 5-6-0  
OVC 3-5-0 (6th, Tie)

Head Coach:  
Jim Ragland  
Record: Overall 39-58-0

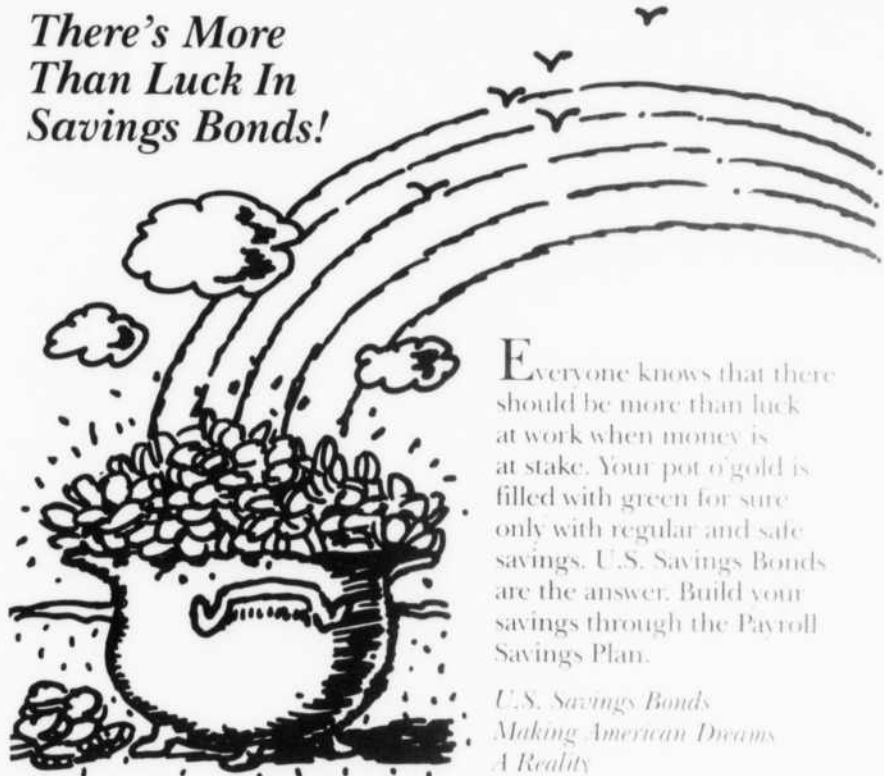
Overall Series:  
MTSU leads 32-31-7

Returning Leaders:  
Mike Penix, TB  
Grad Perry, WR

November, 1:00 p.m.  
Tucker Stadium  
Cookeville, Tenn.

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Nickname: Indians

1994 Record:  
Overall 7-5-0  
OVC 5-3-0 (3th)

Head Coach:  
John Mumford  
Record: Overall 22-33-0

Overall Series:  
MTSU leads 6-0

Returning Leaders:  
Stanley Parker, FB  
Fred Hoston, QB

October 21, 2:00 p.m.  
Jones Field  
Murfreesboro, Tenn.

UT-Martin  
Martin, Tenn.



Nickname: Skyhawks

1994 Record:  
Overall 5-6-0  
OVC 2-6-0 (8th)

Head Coach:  
Don McLeary  
Record: Overall 54-65-0

Overall Series:  
MTSU leads 15-7-1

Returning Leaders:  
Jason Johnson, RB  
Todd Mather, QB

November 4, 2:00 p.m.  
Jones Field  
Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Tennessee State  
Nashville, Tenn.



Nickname: Tigers

1994 Record:  
Overall 5-6-0  
OVC 4-4-0 (4th, Tie)

Head Coach:  
Bill Davis  
Record: Overall 11-62-1

Overall Series:  
MTSU leads 8-7-0

Returning Leaders:  
Lawrence Segree, WR  
Robey Williams, QB

September 2, 6:00 p.m.  
Jones Field  
Murfreesboro, Tenn.



# 1995 non-conference games

Georgia Southern  
Atlanta, Ga.



Nickname: Eagles

1994 Record:  
Overall 6-5-0  
SC 5-3-0 (3rd, Tie)

Head Coach:  
Tim Stowers  
Record: Overall 42-19-0

Overall Series:  
GSU leads 6-4-0

Returning Leaders:  
Marlow Warthen, SB  
Roderick Russell, FB  
Kenny Robinson, QB

September 9, 2:30 p.m.  
Georgia Dome  
Atlanta, Georgia

UAB  
Birmingham, Ala.



Nickname: Blazers

1994 Record:  
Overall 7-4-0

Head Coach:  
Watson Brown  
Record:  
Overall 32-77-1

Overall Series:  
no previous games

Returning Leaders:  
Kevin Drake, QB  
Cedrick Buchannon, WR

September 30  
7:00 p.m.  
Jones Field  
Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Texas A&M  
College Station,  
Texas



Nickname: Aggies

1994 Record:  
Overall 10-0-1  
SWC 6-0-1 (1st)

Head Coach:  
R. C. Slocum  
Record: Overall 59-12-2

Overall Series:  
no previous games

Returning Leaders:  
Leeland McElroy, RB  
Corey Pullig, QB

November 18, 1:00 p.m.  
Kyle Field  
College Station, Texas



File Photo

**Blue Raider split end Demetric Mostiller was among team leaders in receptions last year and should be one of the OVC's best receivers this season.**

## PHOTO CENTER

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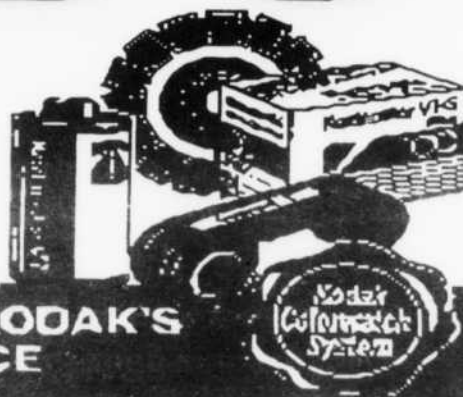
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# Ex-backup backs out on Raiders

QB turned receiver looks to transfer to Tenn. State

STAFF REPORTS

A player who was predicted to be one of the key members of the Blue Raider offense this season has decided to forsake a position change and take his leave from the team entirely.

Junior Brian Davis, who for the last two years had served as backup to former Raider quarterback Kelly Holcomb, missed last Friday's practice session, effectively tendering his resignation from the team.

Davis had struggled throughout offseason practices, resulting in his being moved from quarterback to wide receiver. Tulane transfer Jonathan Quinn was officially named the opening game starting quarterback last week.

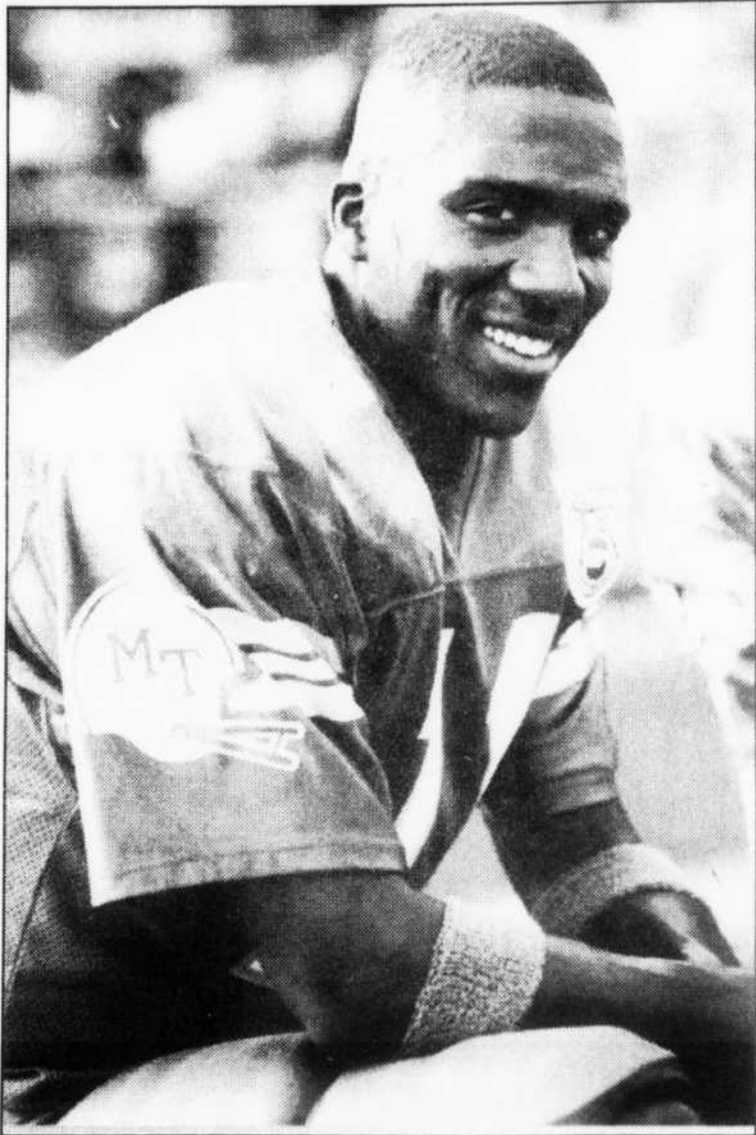
Apparently the former

Riverdale high school standout was unhappy with the position change, although he refused to comment to the media on the matter.

"It's a shame because he really had a chance to help us at wide receiver and he'd come a long way there in a very short time," Blue Raider head coach Boots Donnelly told the Daily News Journal. "It doesn't surprise me that he's decided not to be a part of this football team, though. Nothing surprises me anymore."

Davis will most likely be transferring to OVC rivals and opening day opponent Tennessee State, but before he can play for anyone else, he would have to get a release from the MTSU athletic department.

Blue Raider players and coaches have commented that Davis's departure, while obviously a setback, will not effect their preparation to begin the season this Saturday. ●



Bill Meehan/staff


Ex-Raider quarterback Brian Davis, who left the team last week after being moved to wide receiver.

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STAFF REPORTS

Middle Tennessee State University and the Blue Raider Athletic Association announced its radio station lineup for the 1995-96 season.

WBOZ-FM (104.9) in Murfreesboro will serve as the flagship station for all MTSU football and basketball games. Fans in Nashville will be able to listen to all football games on WKDA-AM (1240). Also joining the network this year are WGNS-AM (1450) in Murfreesboro, WKOM-FM (101.7) in Columbia, WDBL AM & FM (1590/94.3) in Springfield, WAXO-AM (1220) in Lewisburg, and WEKR-AM (1240) and WYTM-FM (105.5) in Fayetteville. Other stations may be added before the season begins.

"We're certainly happy to continue to bring Blue Raider football and basketball to as many MTSU fans as

possible," said Larry Counts, Executive Director of Blue Raider Athletic Association. "Listening to the games on radio has always been important for our fans and providing a quality broadcast has always been important to us. That will continue this season."

"By adding the new stations throughout the Middle Tennessee area," continued Counts, "the fans who have listened to Blue Raider football and basketball in the past will be able to listen again this season."

WBOZ is a new radio station in the Murfreesboro area. However, they have deep ties to the Murfreesboro and MTSU communities.

"When we went on the air, we wanted to provide the very best programming possible," related WBOZ General Manager Dennis Oneal, who also serves as a professor in MTSU's College of Mass Communications.

"Broadcasting the play-by-play of every MTSU is a major step forward for our station and we look forward to bringing the games to the fans in the area."

Dick Palmer will return for his 15th season as the play-by-play voice of the Blue Raiders. he will be joined on the football broadcasts by former Blue Raider assistant football coach Preston O'Neal and MTSU Marketing Promotions Director Chip Walters. Former MTSU assistant basketball coach Jan Staffer will return as analyst on all basketball broadcasts.

All broadcasts on the Blue Raider Sports Network will include a pre-game show and a post-game wrap-up that includes interviews with the head coach and Blue Raider players. The broadcast scheduled begins with the Middle Tennessee-Tennessee State game from Jones Field on the MTSU campus September 2. ●



## Middle Tennessee State University 1995 Football Schedule



Date	Opponent	Site	Time
Sept. 2	Tennessee State	Murfreesboro	7 p.m.
Sept. 9	Georgia Southern	Atlanta, Ga. (Georgia Dome)	7 p.m.
Sept. 16	Middlehead State	Middlehead, Ky.	7 p.m.
Sept. 23	Murray State	Murfreesboro	7 p.m.
Sept. 30	Alabama-Birmingham	Murfreesboro	7 p.m.
Oct. 7	Austin Peay	Clarksville	7 p.m.
Oct. 14	Eastern Kentucky	Richmond, Ky.	7 p.m.
Oct. 21	Southeast Missouri	Murfreesboro	2 p.m.
Oct. 28	Open Date		
Nov. 4	UT-Martin	Murfreesboro (Homecoming)	2 p.m.
Nov. 11	Tennessee Tech	Cookeville	1 p.m.
Nov. 18	Texas A&M	College Station, TX	2 p.m.

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