

# SIDELINES SPORTS

October 30, 2004  
Middle Tennessee vs. Utah State

# REPORT

WATCHING  
HIGH HOPES  
DISAPPE

page 7

# Homecoming events judged only on spirit

By Casey Phillips  
Staff Writer

The events of MTSU's 2004 homecoming week are being judged on contestant enthusiasm and school spirit, not which organization they are competing for.

The events of MTSU's Monster Bash have been designed to promote a more inclusive spirit to the competition. Although a few events have been altered to promote the Halloween theme, the primary differences in this year's events are the changes made to encourage campus-wide competition.

The events of the week range from Tuesday's Community Trick or Treat Fest to Thursday's Monster Mash Costume Ball and Outdoor Concert. In nearly every event, the focus is on the spirit of the competitors and the incorporation of the Monster Bash theme. Monday's Punt, Pass, and Kick-Off Tournament, a single-elimination tournament based on skill, was an exception to this idea.

Like last year, there will be no overall



Photo by Melissa Bowman | Staff Photographer

Amanda Burk plays a ring toss game with Alpha Omicron Pi.

winner to homecoming week. The decision to continue this policy was designed to bring new organizations into the competition.

"Winners of individual events win

trophies for individual contests," Homecoming Director Michael Shirley said. "We did this to encourage the smaller groups to compete."

The float parade on Saturday has

also been altered to make it easier for smaller organizations to participate. The dimensions of the floats have been reduced to make the construction process less consuming, both time-wise as well as in terms of man-power.

"Building a float is an event," Shirley said. "It's not about who has the most money to put forth on the event – it's about getting people involved and excited about this university."

After this year, the hope is that the current feelings of many students, that the events are focused on the participation of Greek organizations, will be changed.

"I didn't even know there were non-Greek organizations competing," sophomore public relations major Will Fanguy said. "I feel as though, in the past, the judging has been biased. I feel the competition is less-biased now that I know non-Greek organizations are competing."

Even among the Greek societies, the dominance of Greek participation is

See **Judging**, 10

Jason Cox  
*Editor in Chief*

Kristin Hall  
*Managing Editor*

Colby Sledge  
*Sports Editor*

Emily Nance  
*Design*

Brandon Morrison  
*Cover Art*

## Float requirements more inclusive

By Melissa Bowman  
Associate News Editor

Campus groups will be toiling away on their floats this week in preparation for Saturday's homecoming parade. But this year's floats may look a little different from last year.

"This year, we took the dimensions of the floats from last year and pretty much divided them in half," Homecoming Director Michael Shirley said. "The reason that we did that was to encourage smaller orgs to enter floats into the parade, and so that they wouldn't be as intimidated to try to compete with the larger organizations."

Shirley said he believes this rule change is the reason behind the increase in entries this year.

"We have almost double the amount of floats that are going to be in the parade this year,

and I think that's directly connected with the fact that we shrunk the size [of the floats] down," Shirley said.

The floats can be no larger than 16 feet long, eight and a half feet wide and 10 feet tall, measuring from the ground.

Shirley said the smaller size has been welcomed by most organizations.

"They still are making very elaborate floats; they're just not as large," he said. "It's saving time and money, so a lot of the organizations are kind of happy about that."

"There is less that you can do," said Mark Miller, president of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity. "I think it's more fun when it's bigger. It's easier on time ... it's just not as fun."

Pi Kappa Alpha will be building a float with Alpha Delta Pi, Alpha Chi Omega and Alpha Phi Alpha this year.

See **Floats**, 10



# Screaming Eagles set to land at Floyd Stadium

## Parachute team will drop game ball from high above

By Colby Sledge  
Sports Editor

The Middle Tennessee-Utah State football game will have a few special visitors before kickoff on Saturday.

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Command Demonstration Parachute Team will bring the game ball to officials from high above as part of the Homecoming festivities.

"This was a coordinated effort between the ROTC, our offices and Dr. Glenn," said Mark Meadows, Assistant Athletic Director for Marketing and Corporate Sales.

"My understanding is that over the last four or five years they were supposed to have jumped a couple of times, but the weather has not permitted it."

The Screaming Eagles began in the late 1950s as a

group of soldiers who volunteered their time to perform demonstrations. The command group formed a full-time team in 1984 and now averages 70 parachute demonstrations per show season.

"The 101st tries to get guys from every area in the Army," said Spc. James Jones, who has served as a 'Screaming Eagle' jumper since May 2004. "Our main goal is to promote the Army and kind of recruit people who are coming in."

The Screaming Eagles have jumped at several local events, including Tennessee Titans games and NASCAR Busch Series races at Nashville Superspeedway. The team recently jumped two weeks ago at the Virginia-Florida State college football game in Tallahassee, Fla.

"Generally we'll have a couple of rehearsals the week of [the jump] where we rehearse what exactly we're going to be



Photo courtesy of 101st Division Screaming Eagles

**The 101st Airborne Division will be a part of MTSU's homecoming activities.**

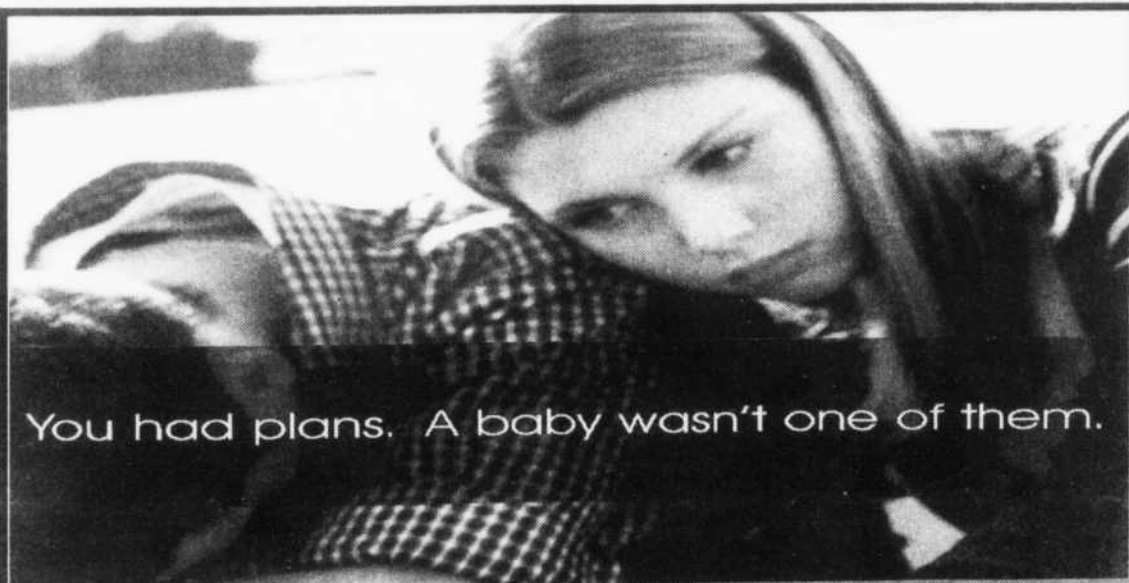
jumping," Jones said. "The preparation starts way before the day of the jump."

Although the team could change, five jumpers are scheduled to participate in

Saturday's exhibition: team leader Staff Sgt. Matthew Cline, Sgt. Matthew Accord, Spc. Chad Conner, Sgt. Dewey Vinaya and Spc. Justin Denton.

The Screaming Eagles will

bring the game ball to the referee along with the U.S. flag and an MT flag. Saturday's game will begin at 2 p.m. at Floyd Stadium. ♦



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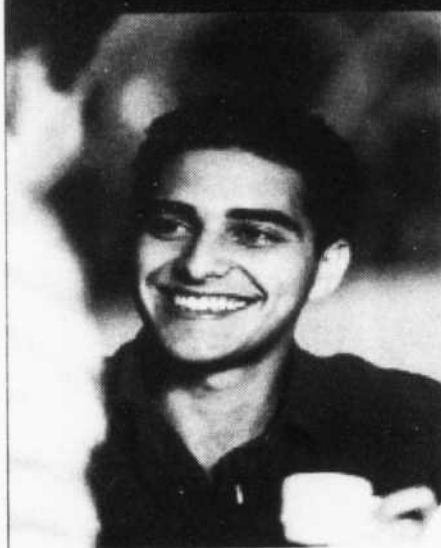
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# Homecoming 2004

## Schedule

### Thursday, Oct. 28

#### Annual Homecoming Golf Tourney

11 a.m. — Indian Hills Golf Course

**Charge: \$100 per person**

Four-man scramble includes lunch, prizes, trophies for the winners, a golf cart, green fees, T-shirt and range balls. Proceeds benefit scholarships.

### Friday, Oct. 29

#### Golden Raiders Reunion Luncheon & Induction Ceremony

11:30 a.m. — Alumni Center

**Charge: \$12 per person for lunch**

Inducting the Class of 1954

#### Golden Raiders Campus Tour

1 p.m. — Alumni Center

**No charge**

#### Cooperative Education Awards Dinner

6 p.m. — TN Room — James Union Bldg.

Call Wayne Rollins for more info at 898-2225.

#### African American Alumni Council Meeting

7 p.m. — Doubletree Hotel

#### Pigskin Pre-Game Event

7 p.m. — New Kennon Sports Hall of Fame

**Charge: \$15 per person in advance; \$20 at the door**

Music, food and fun: proceeds benefit the Rutherford County MTSU Alumni Scholarship Fund

#### Reunion of the 1984 Football Team

7 p.m. — Athletic Facilities tour (Weight Room)

8 p.m. — "Fanatics" at the Doubletree Hotel

#### Movies on the Big Screen

9:30 p.m. at Walnut Grove

**No charge**

Students invite you to return to campus on Friday evening. Bring a blanket, pitch a tent, bring your snacks and settle in for movies!

### Saturday, Oct. 30

#### Alumni & Friends Open House

8 a.m. Alumni Center

**Complimentary**

Alumni and friends are welcome to stop by the Alumni Center for a continental breakfast before the parade.

#### Honors College Open House

9 a.m. - noon

**Complimentary**

Light refreshments and building tours

#### Annual Homecoming Parade with Dr. Aaron Todd as Grand Marshal

9:30 a.m.

Complimentary bleacher seating located in front of the Alumni Center on Tennessee Blvd.

#### Raider Walk

11 a.m. — Walnut Grove

#### Homecoming Barbecue Sponsored by the MTSU Alumni Association and the Blue Raider Athletic Association

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Reservations close at noon on Oct. 29 — RSVP now.

BRAA members complimentary with membership card.

BRAA members MUST make reservations.

\$11 per adult; \$5 per child

The homecoming barbecue will be held at Walnut Grove between Peck Hall and the Cope Administration Building rain or shine. Barbeque sandwiches, baked beans, chips, brownies and sweet tea will be served.

#### Reunion of the 1984 Football Team

Noon - 2 p.m. — Reception in the Kennon Hall of Fame

#### MTSU vs. Utah State

2 p.m.

Floyd Stadium

For ticket information, call 1-888-YES-MTSU

#### Alumni Homecoming Queen Reunion

Halftime — Floyd Stadium

**Complimentary with game ticket purchase**

Were you a former MTSU Homecoming Queen? Join us on the field at halftime and participate in the crowning of the 2004 Homecoming Queen. Call 1-800-533-6878 for more details.

#### African American Alumni Council Dance

9 p.m. — Foundation Reception House

**\$10 per person; \$25 membership dues**

Contact Valerie Avent for reservations at 898-2718 or vavent@mtsu.edu

#### Attention former football players:

Homecoming reunions are now being planned for the 1984 football team. Contact Jim Simpson at 615-898-5632 or jsimpson@mtsu.edu.

# Monster mash ball

## features local bands

### MT Idol finalists perform on stage, costume contest judged on spirit

**By Hillary Robson**  
Staff Writer

Part of Homecoming Week, the Monster Mash Costume Ball, will be held on campus at Walnut Grove at 9 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 28. The ball will feature live music from the local bands The Butter and Sugar Show, Go and Quarter to Nine, as well as performances from the MTSU Idol finalists.

The event was organized by Homecoming Director Michael Shirley, a senior animal science major, who developed the idea by incorporating concepts from last year's successful Cabaret Ball held at the James Union Building.

Shirley explained how the ball was an event that he hoped would appeal to a broad array of students from diverse backgrounds. The ball is sponsored by the Student Government Association and is open to all interested students as well as the general Murfreesboro public.

Tying in the homecoming theme, each organization involved with homecoming will put up one of their members for the costume contest. A panel of judges will evaluate the costumes based on the incorporation of school spirit and the Halloween theme. The winner's organization will be awarded with spirit points.

Emcee for the ball is host of Murfreesboro After Dark's Matthew Parriott. The main act, The Butter and Sugar Show, performs weekly at the 'Boro Bar and Grill and has an eclectic array of songs, from band originals to covers from a variety of musical genres.

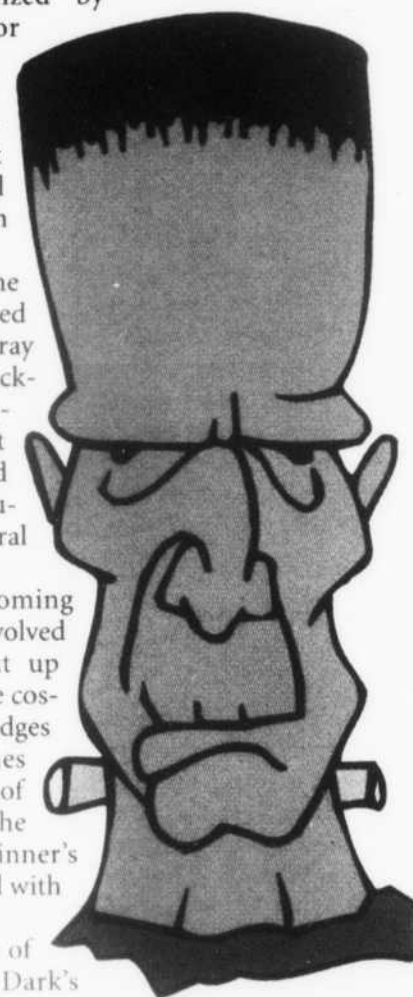
With a repertoire of Elton John to Vanilla Ice to Waylon Jennings, Shirley said, "Anyone who comes to hear them play will hear a song that will make them happy by the end of the night."

The band will accompany the MTSU Idol finalists on a few songs for each performer. The Butter and Sugar Show will be a warm-up to next week's final round of the MTSU Idol competition at Tucker Theatre.

Go and Quarter to Nine both feature MTSU students.

Even though the ball is part of homecoming week, Shirley said, "I can't stress enough how this event is for all students and is about getting excited about our university."

The ball will continue until 1 a.m. "and we won't be leaving early," Shirley said. There is no charge for attending the ball and costumes are recommended but not required. ♦





# Officials remain optimistic on attendance

By Mark Emery  
Staff Writer

Over the last two and a half years, the Middle Tennessee football team has attracted less-than-impressive crowds to Floyd Stadium.

According to a new NCAA rule, this could have huge implications if fan support does not improve.

The rule, which went into effect this season, states that if a Division I-A school does not average 15,000 during a year, that team will be put on probation, including a postseason ban.

If it happens again within a ten-year period, then the football team will again not be able to participate in a bowl game during the following year.

The third year it happens, the team could be dropped to Division I-AA.

If the rule had been put into effect before the 2002 season, the Blue Raiders could quite possibly be playing their last games as a Division I-A participant this season.

The average attendance in 2002 was 11,162 over five home games. Last year that number dropped to 11,021 in six home games.

Through the first three home games this year, the Blue Raiders have averaged 12,705 fans per game. In order to reach the 15,000, the school needs a total attendance of 36,884 between the last two games.

Mark Meadows, Assistant Athletic Director for Marketing and Corporate Sales, said officials are optimistic about still hitting the 15,000 average. Student attendance has been disappointing so far, Meadows said, but the athletic department is working diligently to find out how to affect those numbers.

"We really feel like this was year one of a three-year plan to make the atmosphere more fun to get the students to

come to campus on Saturdays," Meadows said. "We have a lot of students that live off-campus and we try to attract them to campus over in the Walnut Grove area with live bands and all the other activities we have going on there. Hopefully over the next couple of years they'll be more obliged to come."

## Problems, Solutions and More Problems

One of the year's biggest disappointments was the turnout at the season opener versus Florida Atlantic. The game was dubbed Operation: Full House II in honor of former MTSU professor Aaron Todd, who helped set a new attendance record at Murphy Center in February 2004.

University officials were hoping for 30,000-plus fans at the game in order to give them a head start on the attendance requirement. The final numbers were 13,092.

MT Athletic Director Boots Donnelly said the athletic department even changed the starting time from 6 p.m. to 2 p.m. because the Tennessee-Florida game began at 6:30 p.m.

"We had reduced tickets, we had giveaways, we had it all and we had less people this year at the opening ball game," Donnelly said. "Why? I have to assume 4-8, 4-8 records was a major reason."

MTSU has over 22,000 students, but still has not been able to average 15,000 fans per game. Meadows attributed part of that to the fact that a lot of the students do not realize they can get into athletic events for free.

MTSU is also a commuter college, and many students do not live on campus. Meadows said some of the figures he has seen indicate that more than 10,000 students live within 10 minutes

of the school.

"We feel as though even though they are not on campus, they are certainly within reach of us and we have to get them back on campus," Meadows said. "We've just got to work harder to make that happen."

The athletic department has been receiving help from the Student Government Association, which has been providing support and promotions of its own to students.

"We've done different promotions, like the first and last games, we were handing out cups," said Candice Haynes, Vice President of Administration and Public Affairs for SGA. "And the second and third game we passed out towels only to the students – not to other fans – to encourage them in their participation, and the only way they could get the towel was if they stayed through the game."

The Blue Raiders have been hurt, however, by the inability to sell tickets online. MTSU is the only school in the Sun Belt Conference that does not sell tickets to athletic events online.

University officials have been working on this and hope to have online ticket sales up and running by the first of the year, Meadows said.

SGA has run into limitations concerning the Internet as well.

"The only thing we are allowed to do right now is the Pipeline announcements, and there has been difficulty with those this semester because it has been hit with an overload of organizations and so many other different things going on," Haynes said. "At one point, they were trying to eliminate the announcements. Now we've got it to where you can send them out once a day now, but it goes out in a bulk to everyone."

## Crunching the Numbers

Because of the new rule, the school must have an auditor who records the final numbers for the attendance at the home games. The final numbers for the last two home games have come down significantly from initial estimates after the audits.

In the Blue Raiders' win over Arkansas State on Oct. 9, the estimate given for the game was 13,250, but auditors recorded 11,093 fans in their final count. Two weeks later against Idaho, the estimate at the game was 16,918.

When the auditors made their final count, attendance was only 13,931.

Although the NCAA originally required an outside auditor to review initial attendance numbers, university officials are allowed to complete the process.

"The auditing process takes place on Monday so the university can have an accurate count as possible," Donnelly said. "During the game, sometime during halftime or in the second half, the auditors go from gate to gate and secure all the tickets stubs. The auditors sit down on Monday, with the business manager [Zacie Sanderson] and count out the tickets individually."

Donnelly also referred to a second process of counting tickets that he termed "weighing the bag," but admitted that he was not sure what that meant and did not wish to speculate.

*Sidelines* will continue this series next Thursday with a look at what other Sun Belt Conference teams are doing to improve their home attendance. All three installments of the series will also be available at [www.mtsusidelines.com](http://www.mtsusidelines.com) as they are released. ♦

## Blue Raiders to host Utah State

By Jonathan Hutton  
Staff Writer

Saturday afternoon at Floyd Stadium will be a chance for both Middle Tennessee and Utah State to begin to salvage their seasons.

Both teams come into the game hoping to improve on their conference records. Middle Tennessee (3-4, 2-2 Sun Belt Conference) is looking to stay in the top half of the

SBC race, while the Aggies (2-5, 1-2 SBC) are attempting to rebound after losing their last two SBC games.

Utah State returns only four starters on offense and six starters on defense, losing most of their team that routed the Blue Raiders last season 41-20 in Logan, Utah.

The Aggies enter the game off a bye week after losing to Clemson 35-6 two weeks ago.

"[MT is] the type of team

that is going to be pretty unpredictable in terms of if they are going to throw the ball or run the ball on first down," Utah State head coach Mike Dennehy said.

That unpredictable offense will be what MT will need to bring to the game on Saturday. In last week's match up against Idaho, the Blue Raiders focused more on the running

See Utah, 9

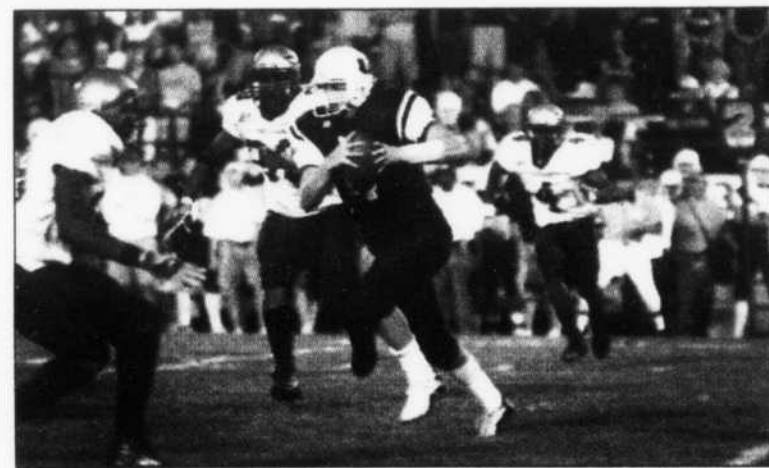
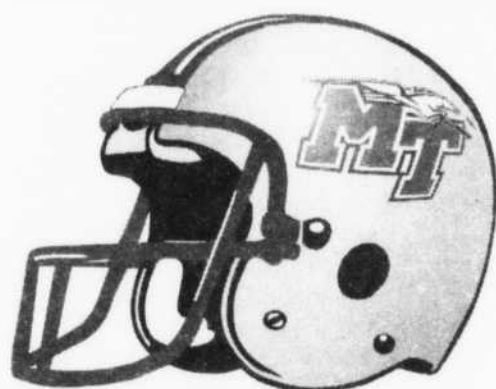


Photo courtesy of USU Media Relations

Travis Cox leads the Aggies with 1,318 passing yards.

# Middle Tennessee Roster Matchup



## Middle Tennessee (3-4) vs Utah State (2-5)



Pos.	No.	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.
Offense					
QB	13	Clint Marks	6-2	187	r-So.
TB	20	Eugene Gross	5-9	212	r-So.
FB	31	Nick McAfee	6-0	244	r-Jr.
WR (X)	1	Kerry Wright	5-9	175	r-Sr.
WR(Y)	15	Cleanord Saintil	5-11	185	Jr.
WR(Z)	11	Pedro Holiday	6-1	182	Sr.
WR(H)	3	Chris Henry	5-8	170	r-Jr.
TE	85	Stephen Chicola	6-5	235	Fr.
LT	60	Willie Hall	6-6	302	r-So.
LG	58	Quinton Staton	6-2	282	r-Jr.
C	57	Marcus Gates	6-2	282	r-So.
RG	71	Joe Evilsizer	6-1	290	Sr.
RT	73	Germayle Franklin	6-4	312	Jr.
Defense					
LE	94	Devarick Scandrett	6-4	262	Jr.
NG	97	Jerry Vanderpool	6-3	308	r-Sr.
T	93	Thomas Johnson	6-2	293	r-Sr.
RE	45	Sean Mosley	6-3	250	r-Fr.
SLB	40	Dennis Burke	6-1	236	Sr.
MLB	23	Alvin Fite	6-0	230	Sr.
WLB	41	Marcell Horne	6-1	218	So.
LC	24	Bradley Robinson	5-10	171	r-Fr.
LS	30	Jermiah Weaver	5-11	180	Jr.
RS	8	Jonathan Harris	5-10	201	So.
RC	5	Damon Nickson	6-0	180	Fr.
Special Teams					
PK/P	46	Colby Smith	5-9	182	r-So.
KO	49	Paul Wheeler	6-1	223	r-Jr.
H	47	Walt Bell	5-10	188	r-So.
LS	36	John Crawford	6-0	252	Jr.
PR	1	Kerry Wright	5-9	175	r-Sr.
KR	6	Lee Baker	5-7	184	Jr.
Head Coach		Andy McCollum			
Athletic Director		Boots Donnelly			

Pos.	No.	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.
Offense					
QB	4	Travis Cox	6-2	208	Sr.
TB	2	Chris Forbes	5-11	185	Fr.
X	6	Kevin Robinson	6-0	188	Fr.
Y	5	Raymond Hicks	5-10	188	Sr.
Z	1	Tony Pennyman	5-9	163	So.
H	19	Tarrell Richards	5-10	191	Fr.
LT	72	Donald Penn	6-3	313	Jr.
LG	61	Victor Eti	6-3	330	Sr.
C	78	Elliott Tupea	6-2	311	Sr.
RG	79	E.J. Reid	6-2	302	Fr.
RT	74	Justin Schlimgen	6-2	283	Jr.
TE	87	Jason Stephens	6-4	245	So.
TE	8	Patrick McNutt	6-6	250	Jr.
FB	88	Jimmy Bohm	6-2	255	r-Fr.
Defense					
LT	92	Ronald Tupea	6-2	295	Sr.
NG	66	Brent Pollock	6-1	309	Sr.
RT	56	Jarom Fano	6-0	247	Jr.
STUD	42	Kelly Poppinga	6-2	242	So.
SAM	46	Jared Johnstun	6-3	221	Sr.
MAC	30	Robert Watts	6-4	234	Sr.
WILL	37	John Chick	6-4	246	Jr.
LC	20	Jerome Dennis	6-1	192	Sr.
SS	24	Antonio Taylor	6-1	200	Fr.
FS	26	Andre Bala	5-11	189	Jr.
RC	29	Cornelius Lamb	6-3	185	Jr.
Special Teams					
P/PK	15	Ben Chaet	6-0	191	Jr.
H	7	Leon Jackson III	6-1	190	r-Fr.
LS	51	Matt Wiser	6-0	233	Jr.
SS	33	Aaron Webb	6-0	235	Fr.
KOR	20	Jerome Dennis	6-1	192	Sr.
PR	6	Kevin Robinson	6-0	188	Fr.
Head Coach		Nick Holt			
Athletic Director		Rob Spear			



# Middle Tennessee vs. Utah State GameDay Preview

By Jon Leffew  
Assistant Sports Editor

## When MT runs

The Blue Raiders rushed for a season-high 165 yards and three touchdowns last week, and most of this came without the services of starter Eugene Gross.

Lee Baker and Terry Jackson stepped up big last week, and despite constant belittling from this sportswriter, the two proved they could play in Gross' absence.

Meanwhile, the Aggies are allowing 225 rushing yards per game, and teams have scored 18 touchdowns against them. With or without Gross, MT gets the nod.

Advantage: MT

## When MT passes

The USU pass defense has been considerably better than the run defense (170 yards per game, 10 touchdowns), but MT quarterback Clint Marks has proven that he can throw the ball around on just about anyone.

Marks has thrown for more than 200 yards in six of seven games, and is currently completing 75 percent of his passes. He is on pace to throw for more than 3,000 yards on the year.

Throw in Mr. Unstoppable Kerry Wright and the rest of the Blue Raider receiving corps, and I would have to take MT in this match up against anyone.

Advantage: MT

## When USU runs

The Aggie rushing "attack" has looked a lot more like a "retreat" this year.

The team averages just 1.9 yards per rush, and they have scored only four touchdowns on the ground this year. USU is led by Chris Forbes, who averages just a hair under 23 yards per game. No, that is not a misprint: 23 yards per game!

Meanwhile, the MT run defense has been the only bright spot for the unit all year.

Advantage: MT

## When USU passes

USU starting signal-caller Travis Cox has thrown for more than 4,000 yards in his illustrious career for the Aggies. He led the Sun Belt in passing and total offense last season, and has continued that success this season.

The Blue Raiders are allowing 293 passing yards per game, and if Cox and company get hot against the MT secondary, this game could become interesting.

Advantage: USU

## Special Teams

In addition to handling his punting duties, Colby Smith has emerged as a reliable, if not spectacular, place-kicker for the Blue Raiders, and kickoff specialist Paul Wheeler got back on track with three touchbacks against Idaho.

Kerry Wright is a definite threat as a punt returner, and the team has blocked three different kicks this year.

For USU, punter/placekicker Ben Chaet is 11th in the nation in punting average, but has missed the last two games with an injury.

Backup punter Leon Jackson has been a capable replacement (45 yards per punt), and Kevin Robinson is an excellent kickoff returner (30 yards per return, two touchdowns). With or without Chaet, this one is too close to call.

Advantage: Even

## Coaching

USU head coach Mick Dennehy has a horrible winning percentage (just more than .250), but his team is 8-7 in the Sun Belt Conference since he took over five years ago.

MT head coach Andy McCollum and the athletic department probably batted an eye when it was announced that former MT offensive coordinator and current Florida offensive coordinator Larry Fedora will not have a job at the end of the year.

Amidst all of this, McCollum has managed to salvage some of what appeared to be a junk heap for a season with wins in the last two weeks.

Advantage: MT

## Intangibles

These two teams have met only twice in their school's history, and both times the home team has won.

USU has only one road win this year, but the team is 5-3 after a bye week under the direction of Dennehy.

MT will try to lure fans to Floyd Stadium without the help of a rapper, instead turning to royalty in an attempt to fill the seats.

Advantage: MT

## Conclusion

The Aggies will come into Floyd Stadium facing a Blue Raider team that has won its last two conference games and is slowly beginning to believe in itself again. Homecoming and the slim hope of a winning season should give Middle Tennessee plenty of motivation to move to 3-1 at home this season. ♦



MT 35

UTAH STATE 17



## Utah: Defense in good position against Utah if offense scores early

Continued from 7

game by giving the ball to multiple running backs and running the option at certain times.

The Blue Raiders come into homecoming weekend after winning their last two home games convincingly over SBC opponents.

Quarterback Clint Marks

will reach 2,000 yards passing on the year with just 64 yards passing in the game, and he is throwing against a USU defense that had given up an average of 34 points per game.

Many of Marks' passes have been directed at wideout Kerry Wright who has 54 catches for 719 yards on the year.

"They have made a really good effort to get the ball into

Kerry Wright's hands," Dennehy said. "We are going to have to be aware of where he is at."

If the Blue Raider offense can get going early, the defense should be in good position going against a USU offense that puts up just 17 points per game. Aggie quarterback Travis Cox is coming off a 12-for-23 game against Clemson

where he only threw for 90 yards. Cox is 115-208 for 1,318 yards this season.

USU presents a very similar rushing attack as the Blue Raiders, in which two to three running backs will see playing time throughout the game.

This week's game will be MT's Homecoming game, which provides a definite advantage for the Blue Raiders.

MT is 44-18-2 all-time in Homecoming games and has won 15 of the last 16. MT head coach Andy McCollum hopes that Homecoming weekend will bring out a good fan base.

"A lot of people will be coming back to the university and hopefully we will have a good crowd after two good wins here at our place," McCollum said. ♦

## Floats: More entries this year

Continued from 2

"It's a great tradition at MTSU, and all the organizations get excited about it, not just the competition part, but about it being another way to show school spirit," Miller said.

Shirley said that a number of groups are entering floats in the parade for the first time, including Raiders For Christ and the Graduate Students Sociology Association.

"We have several groups this year that are making floats for the very first time," Shirley said, "and it's interesting to go and see the way that they're doing it." He said the homecoming committee visits the float building sites periodically to make sure everything is going smoothly.

"In the past, some of the floats have had hydraulics, smoke, fire, music and moving parts, so it's gotten crazy," he said.

The theme for this year's homecoming is Monster Bash, so the floats must also go along with this theme, while incorporating MTSU school spirit.

Even though the groups are given a primary theme, individual floats have more specific themes.

Shirley said there have been some interesting traditional and non-traditional designs in the past, including last year's Ghostbusters float, which won the competition.

"There's always that one creative person in an organization, or two or three, and they just brainstorm and come up with stuff," he said.

The Wesley Foundation's float will be pretty non-tradi-

tional this year.

The float's theme is "Monster of Hunger," and it will incorporate canned goods the Foundation has collected.

"[The students] are not out to spend a lot of money. They'd rather put money into other places," said Bill Campbell, the Wesley Foundation minister. The group has collected the canned goods along with about \$600 to be donated after the parade is over.

"After the parade is over and the float is torn down, all the canned goods will be donated to Second Harvest Food Bank," Campbell said.

The parade will begin at 9:30 a.m. Saturday. Its route will begin at the corner of Maney Avenue and Main Street, go down Main Street, making a left turn on Tennessee Boulevard, then a right turn onto Faulkinberry Street and ending at Walnut Grove.

The float competition will judge the floats' designs as well as the amount of spirit shown by the organizations during the parade. The winners will be announced at the football game. ♦

## Judging: Limited awareness hinders event

Continued from 2

obvious.

"I don't think [homecoming competitions] are biased towards the Greek societies. I just think there is a lot more participation by the Greek societies," freshman physics major and Alpha Tau Omega pledge Sky Nicholson said.

Shirley has acted to overcome the obstacle of limited awareness of homecoming events. As a result, he says, the number of competing organizations has increased over the past two years.

"I sent out 50 homecoming

committee members to talk to non-Greek organizations on campus," Shirley said. "It's paid off because we've had a lot of first-time organizations competing."

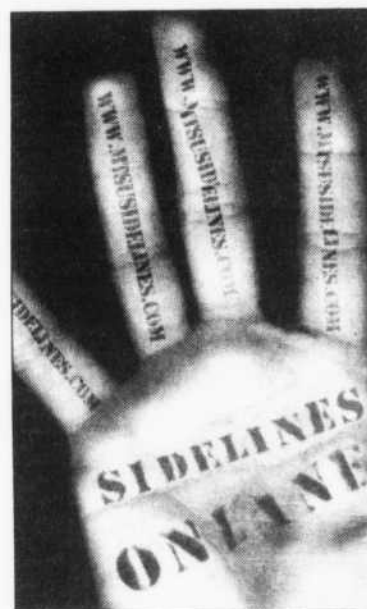
Shirley's efforts early on in the year to promote awareness of the competitions above and beyond the past two years have achieved a substantial increase in participation, particularly in the float parade.

"The number of floats entered in the parade has increased by almost 100 percent since last year," Director of Student Organizations and Community Service Jackie

Victory said.

The culmination of the week's events will be Saturday's football game against Utah State. During the game, the winners of the float competition and other Monster Bash events will be announced. According to Victory, however, the real winners of the competition won't be those announced at the game, but the entire campus.

"Homecoming is not about winning and losing, it's about the spirit of MTSU and students coming together as a whole," Victory said. ♦



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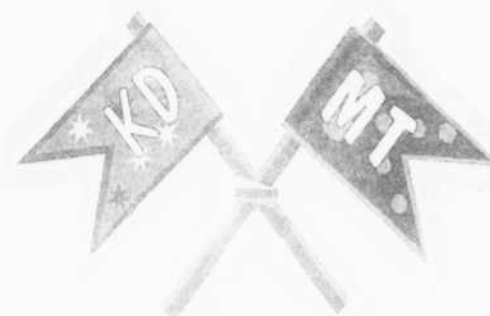
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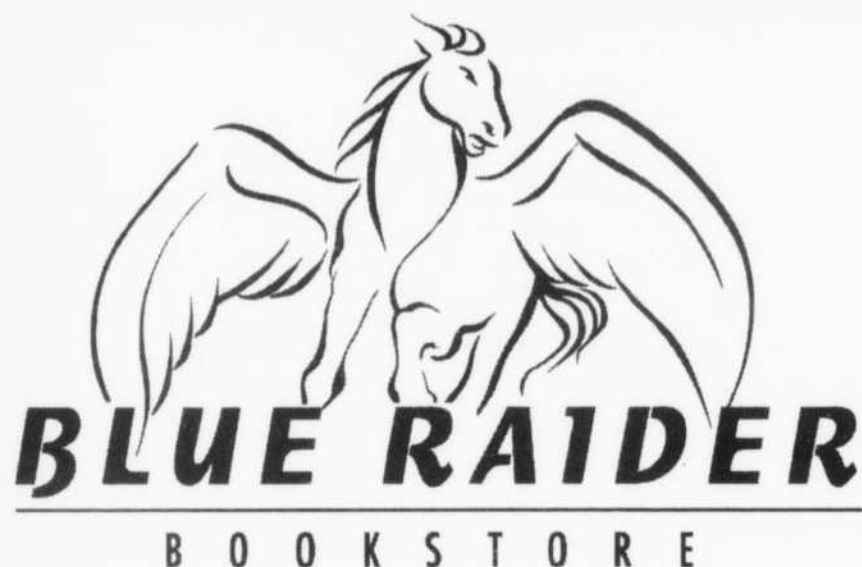


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