

SIDELINES

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Editorially Independent • Monday, Nov. 5, 2007

MTSU Homecoming 2007



Photo contributed by Mark Murphy

Homecoming 2007

Sept. 18 - Homecoming Kickoff concert

Oct. 19 - Fight Song

Nov. 2 - MTSU Idol

Nov. 2-4 - Road Rally to New Orleans

Nov. 5 - 25 cent refills in the KUC

Nov. 6 - Swap Day

Nov. 7 - Horse Shoe Competition

Nov. 9 - Chili Cook-off

Nov. 10 - Homecoming Day Parade- 10 a.m.
Tailgate Competition
Raider Walk 12:30 p.m.
MTSU vs. Louisiana Lafayette 2:30 p.m.

By Tiffany Gibson

Staff Writer

Homecoming began on Sept. 18 and will continue through Nov. 10 when the Blue Raiders take on Louisiana-Lafayette at Floyd Stadium.

The purpose of Homecoming at MTSU and most other major colleges is not simply to enjoy a week of events leading up to a football game, but to bring back alumni to participate and celebrate what they achieved while attending MTSU.

Besides the Homecoming game, student organizations such as Student Programming and the Student Government Association have scheduled events throughout Homecoming that are open to student participation.

Some of these events include the Homecoming Kick-Off concert, the Fight Song tradition, MTSU Idol, Road Rally, distribution of twenty-five cent refill cups in the KUC, Swap Day, the Horseshoe Competition, the Chili Cook-off, the NPHC Step Show, the Homecoming parade, tailgate competition and Raider Walk.

"Our goal was to give all student organizations a chance to branch out on campus and be part of the campus," said Mark Murphy, Homecoming director and senior aerospace major.

Murphy said that there is a record this year of non-Greek organizations participating in Homecoming events.

The Homecoming theme, "A Red, White, and Blue Raider Salute," was chosen this year in honor of celebrating veterans. By chance, Homecoming and Veterans Day fell on the same day and the Student Government Association agreed to celebrate both.

"It has never been done on Veterans Day, and we believe this is a good opportunity to salute our veterans and our community," Clarissa Blackwood, parade and Homecoming assistant director, said.

All of the events happening throughout Homecoming will revolve around the Red, White, and Blue Raider Salute theme, as organizations prepare their unique military themes and their incorporation in numerous events.

Jackie Victory, director of leadership and service, encourages all students and alumni to participate in Homecoming and its various events. Victory said that the students who chose to give back to the MTSU community will in turn find their college experience more rewarding. ♦

See more Homecoming coverage on 2 and 3



Graphic by Matthew Adair
Production Manager

Photo by Patrick Casey / Staff Photographer
Dustin Napier as Mercutio in MTSU's production of William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" in the Boutwell Dramatic Arts Building. See Features, 5, for a review of the play.

Online Q&A with EPA allows students to gain knowledge

Staff Reports

Students can learn about developing problems and sustainability issues tomorrow during an interactive online chat.

At 3 p.m. Tuesday, students can log on to cmeaslink.com and discuss ways that today's college students are developing solutions to pressing sustainability challenges in the world. Individuals will need to use an e-mail address to gain access by clicking "Enter Chat Room" on the Web site.

Jonathan Strach, Appalachian State University graduate student and two-time winner of the Environmental Protection Agency "People, Prosperity and the Planet [P3]" design competition, and Cynthia Nolt-Holms, P3 director, will showcase student projects to develop alternative energy sources, clean water solutions for rural communities, designs for sustainable buildings, green labeling strategies for products, recyclable, bio-based materials and more.

There will be a question-and-answer session in which individuals will be able to address ways the EPA is encouraging students to help move the world toward a sustainable future. ♦

Five Rover routes change Nov. 5

News Release

To better serve riders and attract new prospective riders, changes to five of Rover's six routes will take place Monday. The route changes come six months after Rover began service and after public meetings to listen to existing and prospective riders in Murfreesboro.

"We are basically tweaking the existing routes to eliminate areas with little or no passenger activity and hopefully add service to areas that we feel people are wanting Rover to go," says Bob Nugent, City of Murfreesboro Transit Director. "We still invite anyone who wants to ride Rover to feel free to flag down a Rover bus along a route and we will pick you up. Rover continues to run six routes five days a week starting at 6 a.m. until 6 p.m."

"The greatest changes are to the Mercury and northwest Broad routes," Nugent says. "The Mercury route now will provide service on Broadway between Middle Tennessee Blvd. and South Rutherford, then up South Rutherford to Wal-Mart. On the northwest Broad route, we have changed the route to provide service along portions of Sulphur Springs Road and Jones Blvd."

For specifics on the routes, Nugent recommends going to murfreesborotn.gov and checking on Rover or picking up a Rover schedule. Schedules are available at City Hall, the Linebaugh

See Rover, 3

Symphony music translates to sports

By Faith Franklin

Staff Writer

A traditional orchestra concert engaging a variety of listeners will be held this evening, Nov. 5.

The Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra is set to host the concert with the "Be a Good Sport" theme at 7:30 p.m.

The concert selection will include a mix of "popular and classical music on the same program [that is] tied together with a sports athletic theme," said Jeffery Reed, music director for the Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra.

"We are playing classical music by composers who are inspired by athletics," Reed said.

The show features music from Rossini's "William Tell Overture" for archery, the "Skater's Waltz," and Rimsky-Korsakov's "Dance of the Tumbler" for gymnastics. There will also be music from popular films such as "Rocky" and "The Natural."

"The concert sounds like it would be interesting even though I am not a music major," Donnielle Fitzgerald, a sophomore fashion design major who has taken Music Appreciation, said. "Being exposed to different types of music is all part of being educated and well-rounded."

Reed, who was hired as director in July, began his inaugural season last month by performing with a Beatles tribute band.

Reed said that audiences enjoy a variety of music and he hopes that they will like what the orchestra delivers.

"When I think of athletics I think of the fall; the World Series just ended, you have football in full swing, and Basketball season is getting ready to start," Reed said, adding that now is the perfect season to have the concert.

And with MTSU Homecoming right around the corner, "it seems like a good time to present [this type of concert]," Reed said.

"I like all types of music," said Nekabari Awanen, sophomore political science major. "This concert seems like it would be enjoyable because it is offering such a variety."

With the concert featuring a variety of music "we are trying to [show] MTSU as well as the remainder of the community that there is a connection between the music that we hear on the radio and the music that we have heard historically," J. Brooks Christol, MTSU graduate and public-relations coordinator for the orchestra.

The concert will take place at the First United Methodist Church, 265 W. Thompson Lane in Murfreesboro.

Tickets for general admission are \$35 each and \$10 for student admission.

Tickets for the show are available by calling 898-1862 or by stopping by in person at 210 East Main Street, suite 106. They are also available online at the orchestra's Web site, murfreesborosymphony.com. ♦

Future Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra performances:

◆ Yule Be Home For Christmas - December 17, 2007

◆ That's Italian! - January 21, 2008

◆ Night with Oscar - March 10, 2008

MTSU reproduces Romeo and Juliet

See Features, 5

"Boro must fight for right to party"

See Opinions, 4

MT vs. WKU: Volleyball Preview

See Sports, 7

LOCAL FORECAST

Monday



Hi: 71°
Lo: 37°

Tuesday



Hi: 55°
Lo: 31°

Wednesday



Hi: 53°
Lo: 35°

Thursday



Hi: 57°
Lo: 39°

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Photo by Patrick Casey, Staff Photographer
Dustin Napier as Mercutio in MTSU's production of William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" in the Bownell Dramatic Arts building. See Features, 5, for a review of the play.

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MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Editorially Independent ~ Monday, Nov. 5, 2007

MTSU Homecoming 2007



Photo contributed by Mark Morphy

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Staff Writer

Homecoming began on Sept. 18 and will continue through Sept. 20 with the Homecoming Kickoff concert and Homecoming Day Parade.

The purpose of homecoming at MTSU and most other major colleges is to bring together students and faculty in a variety of ways, but to celebrate the school's history and traditions.

Homecoming is a time when students and faculty can come together to celebrate the school's history and traditions.

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Graphic by Jennifer Star
Marketing Manager

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See Rover, 3

Symphony music translates to sports

By Faith Franklin
Staff Writer

A traditional orchestra concert engaging a community evening, Nov. 5.

The Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra will host the concert with the "Be a Good Samaritan" at 7:30 p.m.

The concert selection will include a mix of popular and classical music on the same program. This is tied together with a sports athlete theme, said Jeffery Reed, music director for the Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra.

"We are playing classical music by composers who are inspired by athletics," Reed said.

The show features music from Rossini's "William Tell Overture" for archery, the "Skater's Waltz" and Rimsky-Korsakov's "Dance of the Tumbler" for gymnastics. There will also be music from popular films such as "Rocky" and "The Sandlot."

"The concert sounds like it would be an interesting even though I am not a music major," Danielle Fitzgerald, a sophomore fashion design major who has taken Music Appreciation, said. "Being exposed to different types of music is all part of being educated and well-rounded."

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LOCAL FORECAST				Vol. 83 No. 18 - www.mtsusidelines.com	
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday		
Hi: 71° Lo: 37°	Hi: 55° Lo: 31°				

A Red, White, and Blue Raider Salute Homecoming 2007

Kick-Off Concert

The Homecoming Kick-off Concert took place on Tuesday, Sept. 18 on the Keathley University Center courtyard at 8:00 p.m.

The Student Government Association, Raider Habitat and the Greek Councils worked together to organize this event by funding and requesting Trotline to come and perform. By funding this event all three organizations hoped to inspire students to sign up for Building Blitz, which is currently in action.

Many of the Greek Councils' themes were announced during this event. All of the themes distributed were in honor of the six military divisions.

Some of these themes included the Army, Navy, National Guard, Air Force, Coast Guard and the Marines.

Throughout Homecoming, all organizations will be expected to portray their theme in various events in honor of veterans.



Photo contributed by Mark Murphy

Students gather outside the Keathley University Center for the preliminary concert to kick-off Homecoming

Road Rally

This year's Road Rally began on Friday, Nov. 2 at 7 a.m. as students departed on a road trip to New Orleans to watch the Blue Raiders compete against Louisiana-Monroe.

Students arrived in New Orleans around 5:00 p.m., where they were placed in hotels and given the option of exploring the city.

On Saturday, Nov. 3, students were given a t-shirt and their game ticket before arriving at the stadium to support the Blue Raiders.

"It [the Road Rally] is an excellent way for our students to be able to support the team at away games, when they might not otherwise be able to do so. Besides, how many other trips on campus will give you a t-shirt, game ticket, hotel lodging and transportation for less than \$100?" Jackie Victory, director of leadership and service, said.

Victory added that Road Rally has been a tradition at MTSU for three years now through the Student Government Association.

Mark Murphy, senior and aerospace major, believes that the Road Rallies have helped encourage students to go to away games and show school spirit.

Horseshoe Competition

The Horseshoe Competition will take place on Wednesday, Nov. 7, at 5:30 p.m. behind the Recreational Center.

If students wish to sign up for this event they must sign up in the Student Government Association's office.

Eligibility for the contest requires a two-person team. Entrants will compete in hopes of winning a \$100 Best Buy gift card.

Greeks will also compete in this event in hopes of earning points toward the Lightning Cup, which will be rewarded at the end of Homecoming.

"I believe Greeks would participate in Homecoming even if we were not competing for the Lightning Cup, because Homecoming is about much more than one organization. The whole school is in unison," said Noel Roberts, senior, public relations major and candidate for Homecoming Queen.

NPHC Step Show

The National Pan-Hellenic Council Step Show will follow the Chili Cook-off on Friday, Nov. 9. The show will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will take place in the Murphy Center.

The NPHC Step Show is an annual event at MTSU that is open to the public and has a huge involvement with Homecoming and the return of alumni.

Alphonzo Griffin from 101.1 The Beat Jamz was approached by the NPHC and agreed to host this year's Step Show as NPHC fraternities and sororities step.

The NPHC fraternities and sororities participating in this event include Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Omega Psi Phi, Phi Beta Sigma, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Lambda Theta Alpha, Sigma Gamma Rho and Zeta Phi Beta.

Justin Phillips, NPHC president, junior, and electronic media production major, said that this year, MTSU participants will be stepping to a much broader audience, including freshmen, community members and travelers.

Phillips said that the NPHC puts on one of the best Step Shows in the state.

According to Phillips, the NPHC does not require the selected military theme to be present during this event.

"The theme is a great way to pay tribute to people that protected freedoms we believe in; but we like for them [NPHC fraternities and sororities] to be creative with their theme," Phillips said.

Tickets sold in advance for this event to MTSU students will cost \$12. General admission, purchased at the door, will cost \$15.

Fight Song

Fight Song was held on Oct. 19 in the Murphy Center as Greek Councils embarked on the first event of portraying their selected military theme.

"Fight Song is a part of the Homecoming activities," Josh McKenzie, senior electronic media journalism major and assistant fight song director, said.

Fight Song has been a tradition at MTSU for 30 years. The event allows participants to replace words from the fight song with other lyrics relating to their Homecoming theme.

The Student Government Association sponsored this free event, which included a Greek majority due to the lack of preparation time for other organizations, according to Chassen Haynes, SGA president.

According to Ashley DeSabetino, SGA's vice president of administration and public affairs, the SGA encouraged other organizations to participate, but unfortunately many could not find time to do so.

McKenzie said that he was surprised at how many people showed up this year. Six teams participated and each group was assigned a specific branch of the military to represent.

Alpha Chi Omega, Kappa Alpha Order and Alpha Tau Omega represented the Army and came in first place.

Alpha Omicron Pi, Pi Kappa Alpha and Phi Beta Sigma represented the National Guard and came in second place.

Zeta Tau Alpha, Sigma Pi and Sigma Alpha Epsilon represented the Marines and came in third place.

"This year, it was a little bit early, but it sets up all the other activities for the rest of the semester, up until Homecoming," McKenzie said.

MTSU Idol

MTSU Idol, a talent competition similar to the television show "American Idol," was held in the Keathley University Center Theatre on Friday, Nov. 2 at 7 p.m.

Student Programming will host the MTSU Idol semifinals at a later date. Semifinalists will include Angela Burton, Jeremy Bumgardner, Tiffany Gray, Andrea Porter, Brandi Treadway, Jamie Sommers, Camille Vickers, Justin Hart, LaSheena Allgood, Brian Bradley, Alaina Hinson and Whitney Rodgers.

Normally, MTSU Idol is not considered a part of Homecoming activities; however, since it happened to occur within the Homecoming time period, Jackie Victory, director of leadership and service, encouraged students to participate.

Chili Cook-off

The Homecoming Chili Cook-off will be held on the Murphy Center Forest at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 9. This event is open to students, alumni and community members and will cost \$5 to attend.

There are currently 30 organizations participating in the Chili Cook-off.

Some of these organizations include restaurants such as Stones River Grill and the Cho House. Campus organizations also participate, as well as Greek organizations and members of the community.

Murphy said the Chili Cook-off is a way to have fun and interact with different organizations while raising funds.

"Everyone should come out, eat some chili and enjoy the atmosphere next Friday night," Jackie Victory, director of leadership and service, said.

25 cent refills in the KUC

25 cent refills will be available in the Grille in the Keathley University Center as part of the Homecoming festivities on Monday, Nov. 5.

Swap Day

Swap Day at the KUC will be held in the Keathley University Center on Tuesday, Nov. 6 and will be sponsored by the Student Government Association.

Swap Day provides a way for students to come to the KUC and swap out other schools' t-shirts for a Blue Raider Homecoming t-shirt.

"It gives students a chance to turn in their ugly orange shirts and various other college shirts for a genuine MTSU Homecoming shirt. I do believe that this promotes school spirit, and the students tend to enjoy this opportunity to get a free shirt," said Chassen Haynes, senior, finance major and Student Body President.

Homecoming Day

Homecoming will take place on Saturday, Nov. 10. Throughout the day, numerous events have been scheduled that will build up to the kick off of the game.

The first event scheduled is the Homecoming parade, which will begin at 10 a.m. and will include 10 large floats decorated with a military theme.

"For the first time in recent years, we have more organization built floats and this should encourage many things, friendship, tradition, MT spirit, and welcoming Alumni back to campus," Jackie Victory, director of leadership and service, said.

Alumni returning to campus will be attending the event along with former MTSU student Chris Young. Young recently won the competition known as "Nashville Star" and will sing the national anthem before the game.

The second event that will take place is the tailgate competition, which is sponsored by the National Alumni Board.

The tailgate competition will consist of various organizations and their decorated tents. The winner of this contest will receive \$200.

After the tailgate competition, the RaiderWalk will begin at 12:30 p.m. on Walnut Grove.

Following the RaiderWalk students will make their way to the football stadium to support the Blue Raiders.

"Homecoming is a most respected tradition where students come together to be a Raider," Cassy Venable, senior, interdisciplinary studies major, and president of the National Panhellenic council, said.

The Homecoming game will take place at 2:30 p.m. when the Raiders take on Louisiana-Lafayette at Floyd Stadium.

During halftime, veterans will be honored by a salute while cargo planes fly overhead throughout the ceremony. Homecoming court will also take place during halftime as the five couples take the field in hopes of becoming MTSU's 2007 King and Queen.

The nominees for King are Joshua McKenzie, Matt Holt, Chris Williams, David Angel and Danny Bounds. The nominees for Queen are Megan Ryan, Noel Roberts, Laura Simpson, Emily Porter and Cassy Venable.

"It's an honor to be chosen out of 23,000 to represent MTSU and this homecoming tradition," said Noel Roberts, senior public relations major. ♦

Homecoming King and Queen Candidates:



Simpson



Venable



Porter



Roberts



Ryan



Holt



Angel



Williams



McKenzie



Bounds

Alleged attempted abductor arrested after second lurking

Press Release

The man who approached and grabbed the arm of a female MTSU student in the Fairview parking lot on Oct. 8th, was apprehended on Nov. 1 shortly after noon and taken into custody.

The suspect, Larry Christanson, 44 years of age, was spotted near the same general area by a student who, after recognizing him from the police sketch, notified the MTSU Police.

The man was later positively identified by the student who initially reported the Oct. 8th incident. The suspect, who is not an MTSU student, was charged with assault and taken to the Rutherford County Jail. ♦

Stockpiling energy

By Jarred Justice

Contributing Writer

A bill designed to further research in the development of energy and energy storage was approved by the U. S. House of Representatives Oct. 22.

Though mainly used for furthering electricity-driven vehicles, it promises also to improve other forms of energy production, enhancing solar and wind power. Also, this bill is an attempt to reduce use of fossil fuels, which may currently be only procured through foreign policy or retrieval, according to State Representative Bart Gordon.

"It doesn't seem as though it would be real useful for vehicles," said Brian Peel, freshman recording industry major. "When dealing with blackouts in cities it

could literally save lives. With the sick and elderly people in heat who rely on air conditioning, having a back-up source of electricity is a necessity."

Currently, the United States generates as much energy as is being used. This bill is designated to eliminate this practice, producing more power than is needed. In doing so, energy companies can stockpile energy in case of an emergency, such as tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, or rolling blackouts.

"Getting a system being able to solely depend on these alternate forms of power would be top priority with the prices of gas going up," Peel said. "If we could power or re-supply power to these vehicles as easily as we could refill them with gas it would be an amazing development." ♦

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Come Celebrate National Nontraditional Student Week Nov. 5 - 9, 2007

Tuesday, Nov. 6 ---
Open House for Faculty and Staff

8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. in KUC 320

Night Owls Open House
4:00 - 6:30 p.m. in KUC 320

Come by for cider and goodies.

Wednesday, Nov. 7 --
Nontraditional Student Day
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
in the KUC 2nd floor lobby area
in front of the Grill.

Thursday, Nov. 8 ---
Nontraditional Student Dinner
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
in the Tom Jackson Bldg.
(formerly Alumni Hall)

Phone 898-5989 for details about the potluck dinner and to reserve a place for you and your family members. Pinnacle Honor Society initiation and Fall Awards follow the dinner.

SALE! 50% - 80% off designer brand formalwear and bridal wear

Guys we are now offering RENTAL tuxedos!

Buy your dress and get 10% off any accessories needed for your special night!

Hey Greek girls and guys, stop by and see us if you have a formal or special event this fall!

(Must show MTSU I.D. at time of purchase)

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Rover

Continued from 1

Library, Patterson Park Community Center, Murfreesboro Housing Authority, at many apartment complexes and from any Rover bus driver.

Rover, the City of Murfreesboro's public transportation system, began operation in March. Each one-way trip on Rover is \$1. Transfers are free. Bus tickets are available from each bus driver. It's easy to ride Rover; below are five steps to help you ride the bus. For more information about Rover, call (615) 615-21ROVER or (615-217-6837). ♦

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK PARTICIPANT APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

Applications available in KUC 326-S and online at www.mtsu.edu/~camporgs.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: NOVEMBER 21, 2007

Alternative Spring Break is a life-changing experience that provides service opportunities outside of Tennessee during spring break. Students participate in intensive service experiences that provide them an opportunity to make a true difference in the lives of others.

Rover Reminders:

- ♦ All routes originate and transfer at the Rover Corner Center at the west corner of Walnut and Burton.
- ♦ Rover offers six routes in Murfreesboro, with buses run Monday through Friday, five days a week, from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m.
- ♦ Rover bus drivers try very hard to stay on schedule, so get to the stop a few minutes early.
- ♦ Check to be sure it is the right bus before boarding. Each bus shows its destination and route number above the front windshield.
- ♦ Every Rover bus has a bike rack and is wheelchair-accessible.

Classifieds

Marketplace of MTSU

EMPLOYMENT

Need a job? Home City Ice needs you! Flexible scheduling; minutes from campus; up to \$14.00/hour. Apply online at homecityice.com or call (800)843-8901 ask for Jon or Derek.

Holiday Help: Great Pay! Flexible schedules, sales/svc, no exp needed, conditions apply, all ages 18+, call now! 832-8448 workforstudents.com

FOR RENT

Raiders Ridge 3brm/3bth. Available mid-December! Dec. rent paid, furnished, utilities included \$429 per month per person, individual leases (270) 314-2197.

FOR LEASE

Girl needed to fill room and take over lease at Raiders Crossing Apartments. Want to

move out as soon as possible. Lease lasts until August. (615) 516-6438

FOR SALE

2006 Crossroads Cruiser Fifth Wheel 31 ft, 3 slides, upgrades galore, outside shower, non-smoker, less than 2,000 miles. Hitch, covers. Photos and info: pthomas@mtsu.edu.

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you can afford from our website: www.AustinEnterprises.biz (432)867-1035

2002 Dodge Stratus SE Sedan, Silver, PDL, PW, CD, New Tires, 110K high way miles, lady driven, non-smoker, cruise control, A/C, great buy! Call: 615-335-2147.

Good Price-Good Investment. House in subdivision close to campus, shopping and

interstate. Refurbished kitchen, new flooring, paint throughout. Bob Cunningham, Bob Parks, Realty 615-973-3659

ROOMMATES

OPPORTUNITIES

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OPINIONS

From the Editorial Board: Homecoming: Cure for apathy, student involvement needed

By now, an abundance of Blue Raider cheer on campus should be readily apparent, as the university gears up for another Homecoming season.

Despite the mind-numbing plethora of frivolous festivities, Homecoming does serve a somewhat noble purpose – unity.

Although the majority of the editorial board will be sleeping-in on game day, like all students, we will be bombarded throughout the week with random Lightning sightings, upbeat Greeks and tailgate invasion.

Classes in the James Union Building, Kirksey Old Main and Peck Hall will be continuously disrupted; Walnut Grove will be flooded with Solo cups and unobservant law enforcement; and a whole bunch of strangers will be running around campus. The question is why continuously subject our university grounds, our sanity and ourselves to this clichéd college celebration?

Perhaps we really are masochistic or maybe we just enjoy feeling like we belong. Although MTSU is notorious for being a suitcase campus with students who drift apathetically from one class to another, for one week everyone can celebrate being a Blue Raider.

The question now becomes whether this unity blanket embroidered with "I'm One!" is actually appealing. Despite the university's cheesy recruitment campaign, MTSU isn't so bad. We do boast the highest number of Tennessee valedictorians and salutatorians. The Blue Raiders are decent compared to similar university football teams. We even have a few brand-name fast food options.

So why is there still a foreboding cloud of apathy hanging over the campus? We're not trying to sound too much like an after-school special, but the student body should be spending the week celebrating the fact that we are all a part of MTSU.

With that said, thanks Student Life, Homecoming Committee, Alumni Association and all the other organizations that have worked all year to prepare MTSU for a singular weeklong event. Thank you to the fans and alumni who support the university. But mostly, thank you to the students who endure the aforementioned disruptions to their daily cycle – all for the sake of unity.

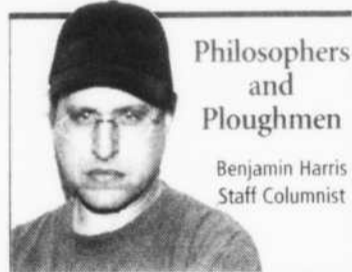
Handgun permit holders safe with concealed guns

Imagine you are walking along, minding your own business, when suddenly you are faced with grievous bodily harm or loss of life through criminal force. What are your options? Do you, A) pray for divine intervention, B) yell for help, C) initiate firearm-based self-defense protocols. Let's examine the potential outcomes of these various possibilities.

You pray for divine intervention. A couple of things might happen. God intervenes, and you become a prophet for the modern age. Or the attack succeeds, and you are killed or end up like Hilary Swank in "Million Dollar Baby." I'll leave it to the reader to decide which is more likely.

You yell for help. Again, we have a couple of possibilities. In the few seconds between the time you yell and the attack ensues, you are rescued by someone willing and able to deter the force. In order for this approach to succeed, first the rescuer must be in sufficient proximity to initiate action. Unfortunately, most criminals plan their activities to coincide with situations where they perceive the victim to be the most vulnerable. But, there is the remote possibility that your attacker is really stupid and decides to attack in sight of a police officer. You're safe right? Well, not necessarily. Police may take an oath to protect, but as far as I know, no court has ever held an officer liable to the public for failing to offer protection. Their job is to collect evidence and apprehend criminal suspects, not to be your babysitter. All in all, I would say the chances of yelling for help only have a slightly better chance of success than praying for divine intervention.

A third choice: You initiate firearms based self-defense. A few things could happen. Your defense fails and you succumb to the attack. You are no worse off than in the first two scenarios. Or, the attack is repulsed and you continue your existence sound of life and limb. This is actually a fairly common result when people have access to the third option. This is the only option where this result is fairly common as well. However, there is an additional risk in this scenario, namely that a stray bullet will hit a bystander. This is not a common result, however,



**Philosophers
and
Ploughmen**
Benjamin Harris
Staff Columnist

because again criminal attacks are much less likely in the presence of bystanders.

Of course, allowing an armed population is just inviting blood in the streets. Isn't that common sense? When Florida switched to a shall-issue carry permit policy many people thought exactly that. However, it didn't happen. Many states have gone to the shall-issue carry permit policy with the same result, namely responsible law-abiding citizens going about their business – with the difference that they retain the third option from above. This may actually deter thugs, as the criminals are aware that more people have this option.

The State of Tennessee does not issue permits to the "bad guys." Permit holders understand what kind of trouble they will get into if they escalate confrontations while in possession of a firearm. Permit holders are always the first to avoid confrontation because they know their responsibilities associated with the right to carry and the harsh penalties they face if they fail in those responsibilities.

Should we allow permit holders to carry on campus? I don't know. Personally, I feel safer in some situations armed. I make no apologies for wanting to take measures to provide for my personal protection, especially since I bear sole responsibility in the matter. I understand that someone that is unarmed will almost never feel safer when others are armed. Also, firearms are extremely dangerous, and the slightest irresponsibility could lead to disaster.

However, all the arguments based on speculation that "more guns lead to more violence" are bogus, provided we are referring to situations where the bearer has demonstrated to the State that he or she is responsible to be trusted with possession of the firearm.

Benjamin Harris is a senior guitar performance major and can be reached at bmk2k@mtsu.edu.



'Boro must fight for right to party

One of my favorite things about Murfreesboro, and one of the reasons I moved here to attend MTSU, is the burgeoning music scene.

Fellow music lovers are naturally drawn here, since the recording-industry school ranks among the best in the country, and it's just a short drive to Music City. Compared to the pitifully narrow scenes I haunted as a teenager in Alabama, this town rules.

So it was with great sadness that I learned last week of a letter some friends received from the City of Murfreesboro. Like me, these friends moved here for the music scene, and like me, they felt betrayed as we read the letter in collective horror.

The friends I'm referring to are the Zombies Bazooka Patrol – an undead folk-punk band that spends all year looking forward to Halloween. Their stronghold is a suburban home known as House Pride.

Hot off a strong appearance at Fox last week the band was planning a banger of a house show and inviting all their friends. Since many of their friends are musicians as well, this made for a packed lineup. It was even on the college radio concert calendar.

Then came the letter, vaguely grumbling that such a concert would be a misdemeanor violation of local zoning ordinances. This part was unspecific, but it was quite clear in saying the police and fire department had been notified, along with the landlord, and any other legal violations would lead to a thorough spanking from the City of Murfreesboro.

Why would they do this? The neighbors have never complained about noise when the band rehearses. Nobody's charging cover, so it's not an illegal business. Underage drinking can't be a serious con-



iscaRIOT

Daniel Potter
Staff Columnist

cern; if it was, the city would also have to crack down on hundreds of game-day tailgaters – fat chance.

I went to the office of Robert Lewis, the city planner who sent the letter, and asked him – Why shut down the show?

"Probably because we know your parents love you, and I'd hate to see anything happen to them," he told me. "Chances are it wouldn't happen, but you never know – accidents happen."

That answer echoes the experience of Nick Naioti, the show's planner, who said Lewis could not explain what exactly was illegal about the show, making it impossible for Naioti to change anything in hopes of the party proceeding unhindered.

"I don't really honestly believe there is a law that prevents house shows. Maybe capacity issues, or noise violations I could understand," Naioti said. "To notify my landlord, that seems out of his jurisdiction."

For his part, Lewis argued the City simply didn't know if too many people would show up for it to be safe, and erred on the side of caution. He referred multiple times to the nightclub fire in Rhode Island four years ago, where a hundred people perished due to mismanaged pyrotechnics and an ensuing stampede to escape the blaze.

Of course, that tragedy occurred in an

actual venue, not a house, and represents an extremely rare case, but debating with Lewis is an exercise in futility. "You can call me a party pooper. Maybe nothing could've happened," he said. "I'll take ridicule any day, as long as we can save somebody's life."

I don't pretend to know whether the show at House Pride would've endangered anyone's life, but it's frustrating that the City opted to act swiftly and irrevocably, rather than reserving judgment until it had the facts. Lewis feared a stage in the front yard and a crowd of hundreds, but such fears could've been dissuaded if he'd only asked Naioti before acting against him.

Regrettably, this weak brand of logic, suspicious and threatening of things it doesn't bother to understand, is nothing new from our government.

If you read the news much, you're familiar with the politics of fear. Just watch a few clips of Republican presidential debates and you'll pick up on it – the constant insinuation of dire threats that demand immediate action, tenuous evidence be damned.

This is the basis for the American policy of military preemption. You don't have to be a news junkie to know that its execution has been a disaster in Iraq, though the policy's bellicose adherents can't wait for the sequel in Iran.

In "The Assault on Reason," Al Gore writes of exactly this: "We seem to be having unusual difficulty in distinguishing between illusory threats and legitimate ones."

Of all the things the City of Murfreesboro could mistake for a threat, it's hard to believe live music would be one of them.

Daniel Potter is a senior journalism major and can be reached at dgp2h@mtsu.edu.

Learn your business buzzwords

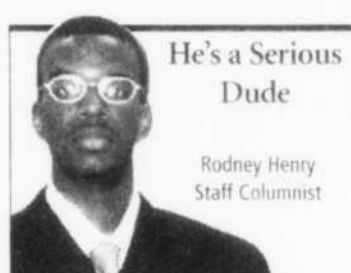
The world of business changes year by year, as each brings something new to the game. With the growth comes along new ideas that help guide the advancement of the way the business world operates. These ideas are formed from words, words that are coined buzzwords that lead the actions of many. Business buzzwords have for years been the fire that has ignited the minds of many.

In the past, there were the Internet, the Four P's of marketing and benchmarking among thousands of others. Of course, these phrases still hold weight in today's world but there are others that are taking the lead and are birthing new life within the business world.

There is the concept of Blue Ocean Strategy, where you go against the old idea of benchmarking into a sea of open ideas and innovations.

This leads to innovation in itself, companies are creating ways of turning the old into something totally new. With the idea of innovation within a company or an industry comes along the creation of the 'new entrepreneur,' or what is known as corporate entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship.

Here, companies are embracing the creative guys and allow-



**He's a Serious
Dude**

Rodney Henry
Staff Columnist

ing them to lead the company in new directions.

Most of these buzzwords or phrases deal with strategy, where companies are in some ways forced to look at things a little differently then before in order to surpass those that have been innovative for years.

For instance, Japanese companies continue to improve their products and services yearly, while American companies do so only when forced to by competition. This is one cause of the growth that Asian companies are enjoying and the lack thereof within many American companies and industries.

Strategy is what places one company ahead of another, with that understanding having a company that clinches onto the idea of the "knowledge economy," a theory coined by Peter Drucker in the 1960s, where knowledge is taking a seat at the table where before many business leaders thought that to be

successful, you successfully marshaled capital and labor.

A "knowledge economy" changes the development of strategies and in general, the way business is done. It has certainly made the concept of Web 2.0 a realistic way of old and new emerging industries.

Web 2.0 is where people become able to participate in the Internet, the exchanging of ideas – blogs, direct interaction with companies, emails etc. Web 2.0 has, for many reasons become a vital part of any business that wants to connect with its customers on a continuous basis.

Blossoming from Web 2.0, viral marketing has become a leader in the way marketing on the Internet has surpassed other forms of direct marketing formulas. Viral marketing is the usage of social networking to advertise to customers that are within or on their way into your market. Sites like Facebook and Myspace have pushed the concept into the minds of business owners and into the eyes and ears of consumers without them knowing.

Two buzzwords that have been around for some time but are still as important as days past are "Six Sigma" and "Return on Investment, or ROI. Six Sigma was developed by Motorola in

the 1980s to cut down the number of defects. Some think that it is only good for manufacturing but it applies to the service industry as well.

The process is Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control - DMAIC. Its aim is to produce no more than 3.4 defective parts per million. That may seem like perfection, but most companies are far from this in real terms. In regards to the service industry, Six Sigma could increase customer satisfaction, where the aim could be to reach a certain level of satisfaction.

Now to ROI, the investment should be a small percentage of the return you will receive. Within the marketing world, ROI on marketing dollars and as ROI on brand management are key terms to marketing success.

These business buzzwords are just the tipping point, another thing to investigate, to the mass of information or knowledge one should have.

This allows one to swim with the business tide, or if chosen, to dive into the blue ocean and swim alone.

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SIDELINES
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FEATURES



Hip-hop success story

By Justin Keoninh

Photography Editor

"You know, I sat in that very seat, and failed in this very room," Count Bass D says, pointing to the back of a classroom in the Saunders Fine Arts Building.

Holding up an SP1200 beat machine to his chest, the 34-year-old Count speaks to Felicia Miyakawa's hip-hop class and other interested members of the MTSU community about what he believes is important in music production and sampling. There's hardly an empty seat in the room.

Touching from the deep roots of hip-hop sampling to the present day phenomena of one hit wonders, Count presents his unique perspective on music making.

"I don't believe anybody should call themselves a hip-hop producer if they're not touching their own buttons, in my book," Count says, his arms spread out and head enthusiastically nodding.

He emphasizes that an understanding of the drum machine is a must, mentioning that every major producer such as Dr. Dre, DJ Premier and Jay Dilla spend a huge amount of time on their machines day in and day out.

Before Count Bass D became the Count, he paid his dues from the age of 10. He had no idea what to do after he graduated from a boarding school in Pennsylvania.

After working with Digital Underground, the band responsible for "Do the Humpty-Hump" and giving Tupac exposure, Count found MTSU's music program listed in "Mix Magazine" and suddenly had an idea of where to go next.

In due course, Count ended up here, living at Nick's Hall during fall of 1991.

His main goal during his first semester was to get on the microphone at parties, he tells the class. But by the second semester, he stopped going to class.

"We're not preaching a lifestyle here, folks," Miyakawa jumps in to say.

Count just smiles back and replies, "I'm just telling you guys honestly."

After dropping out of college, Count signed with his first label and released his first album, "Pre-Life Crisis."

The album was recorded entirely with live instrumentation, mostly played by the Count himself.

Since then, he's made a conscious effort to ignore trends and focus on how "greasy" he can get with his music. Count believes in learning the foundation of production: only from there, he says, can one bring in true personal style.

"It's about what you can bring to the table," he says. "There's no reason why anybody's music, no reason why anybody's lyrics, should sound like anybody else's."

From an academic viewpoint, Count's lecture shows a point of view that few can talk about. He has worked with diverse artists such as bass master Victor Wooten, soulful Grammy-nominated Van Hunt and the venomous lyricist MF Doom.

"Hearing what a live producer values in sampling and what he values in the production process he has is something I hope the class got out of the lecture," Miyakawa says.

It's never been about money for Count. Instead, he's always been driven to influence others so they can push the boundaries in their culture.

But Count firmly believes that artists trying to make it in the industry should have self-respect, because "it's never worth it once you sell that." ♦

A rose by any other name

By Rachel Nutt

Contributing Writer

It's Shakespeare season at MTSU. The play is "Romeo and Juliet," and it was nothing like I expected.

At 7:30 on Friday night, I sat down in the Tucker Theatre expecting a typical, slightly stale production of the play.

Everyone says that Shakespeare is timeless, but I have to admit I've doubted this statement. The man was a genius, yes, but after chewing up each of his plays thousands of times, there comes a time to swallow.

From the beginning of the play, one of the most striking aspects is the set. As the backdrop, a screen featuring various colors and patterns is used to set different moods. Two large staircases and a balcony are rearranged in each scene to become different places.

This method is very effective, but perhaps the most interesting part of the set is the chorus. The five people that make up the chorus are constantly draped on staircases or frozen in entrancing poses. Between scenes, they dance as the set is changed, their silhouettes against the dim light making for a very aesthetically pleasing experience.

Costumes also serve as an important part of the play, filling in any blanks that a lack of an extensive set might leave. If there was much more to the set, it would be distracting and cliché.

But the minimal yet beautiful scenery left me ready to absorb the plot.

While watching, it occurred to me that I had seen a few of these actors in a campus play just last month. I had to wonder if they'd struggled remembering lines and blocking so soon after putting on another full-length performance.

As an audience member though, I never would have guessed that the actors hadn't had all the time in the world to prepare.

In fact, I remember virtually no stumbling over lines or obvious mistakes in general.

One of the most standout actors is Lane Davies. I noticed the musicality of his voice and his complete devotion to his character before I was told that he is a famous, very accomplished actor. Davies has starred in soap operas like "General Hospital" and "Santa Barbara," and has also appeared in television shows such as "Scrubs" and "Seinfeld."

His role as Capulet is memorable, even though his character does not have as many lines as others.

The aforementioned potential of this play to be stale was shot down as soon as Davies opened his mouth.

And no one could forget one of Shakespeare's most beloved characters, Mercutio. Senior Dustin Napier is beyond outstanding in this role. He embodies the character of Mercutio with his love of women and humor to his philosophical side, causing audience members to become attached to him enough to mourn with Romeo and Benvolio upon his death.

Among other memorable actors is freshman Jesse Cannady as Peter the messenger boy; the role is small but the humor is great.

Paris, played by junior Justin Bourdet is also well cast, as he quite convincingly portrays Paris's ego. Junior Valerie Meek as Lady Capulet is another favorite, impersonating her character's powerful, snobby, upper-class attitude with ease.

Both Bourdet and Meek acted in last month's play, "Mother Courage and Her Children."

Sophomore Matthew Frazier-Smith and Junior Alli Scott as the title characters are ideal, personifying young love accurately.

In the college world of random hookups and one-night stands, Frazier-Smith and Scott's depiction of true love felt fresh.

To mention all the actors would be unreasonable, but even from the smallest parts, like the chorus members, who have few lines but have to hold unusual positions for long periods of time, to larger roles, like Jamie Stevens as the nurse, each individual's work was near impeccable on Friday night.

In a room full of students who were required to attend the play for a class, perhaps few appreciated all the verbal humor. But they did appreciate the physical antics. The blocking of the performance is virtually flawless. In true Shakespearean fashion, there is a fair amount of slapping, jumping into people's arms and dancing about, and these actors make it look natural.

Also difficult to overlook is the stage combat. Dying onstage is often cliché, but each fight scene of this performance, from swords to deaths, is believable.

Upon seeing the play, my respect for modern performances of Shakespeare was completely restored.

I would encourage anyone even slightly interested to attend another performance, Nov. 7 through 10.

And coming from a college student who gave up part of her Friday night to be there, that statement means a lot. ♦

What's next for MTSU Theater

Fall Dance Concert

Nov. 29 through Dec. 1: All performances at 7:30 p.m. in BDA Tucker Theatre

"Baby"

Book by Sybille Pearson, Lyrics by Richard Malby, Jr., Music by David Shire
Feb. 15 through 16 and 20 through 23, 2008: All performances at 7:30 p.m. in BDA Tucker Theatre

"Untitled: An Original Student Production" by Ian Hunt

March 28 through 29 and April 2 through 5, 2008: All performances at 7:30 p.m. in BDA Tucker Theatre

Spring Dance Concert

April 17 through 19, 2008: All performances at 7:30 p.m. in BDA Tucker Theatre

Photo by Patrick Cawc / Staff Photographer

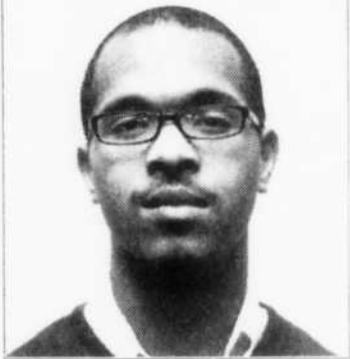


SPORTS

MTSU's time is now

The Lowedown

Richard Lowe
Assistant Sports Editor



It took a while for Bradley Robinson's kick-off return for a touchdown to register in my head. Maybe it was because of the Appalachian State-like call I got from Charlie McAlexander and Chip Walters but I can't blame them. In the span of eight seconds, Robinson not only returned the game winning score for the Blue Raiders but he also grabbed hold of the Blue Raider bandwagon and stated, "Either roll with me or get rolled over."

I have been waiting since Oct. 1, 2005 for an event like this to take place. That was the day that Jonathan Harris blocked a field goal that would have given the victory to Vanderbilt. No other game has touched me with as much emotion since, but there have been plenty of close calls - namely Troy last year, and Louisville, Western Kentucky, and Virginia this year.

These were all close calls because winning those games would have done wonders for this school's fan base and would have brought notoriety to the football program. Instead they all ended as losses and brought frustration to not only the players in the game, but the fans that have been hungry for a signature win for quite some time.

How important is a signature win? It became a focal point in the head coaching search two years ago. It is always a hot topic in the message boards. Not to mention it seems as though the national media is begging for Middle Tennessee to pull off an upset. Anytime you hear of the Blue Raiders within 10 points of any power six conference school, ESPN will interrupt any program short of the reappearance of Jesus Christ to report it.

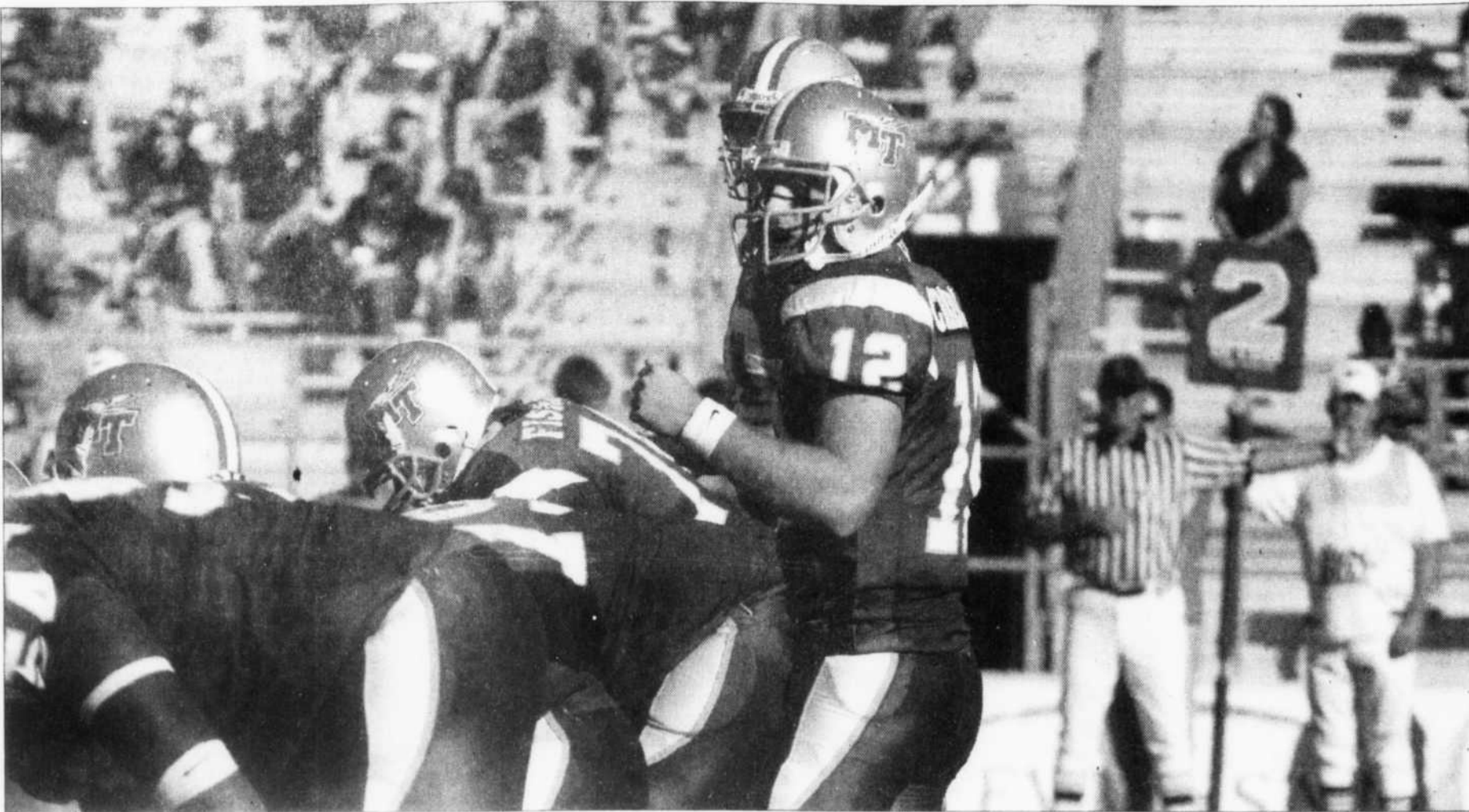
Middle Tennessee is not just a local favorite anymore. It is slowly becoming a statewide favorite and soon a national phenomenon. Fans of other schools will doubt my beliefs but the opportunities are apparent. The diminishing reputations of the other three FBS football programs in Tennessee has made room for MT to grab to hearts of fans looking for a school to root for. To add to the university's growing reputation, MT has been able to show that it is not just a football school by having all sports, whether fans view them as major or minor, succeed in their own right.

In the next four years, MT will be hosting Maryland, Memphis, and Georgia Tech. These schools know that national exposure can lead to increased funding from donors who, for the most part, haven't heard of MT or its academic and athletic programs. High school students from across the country can now place their interest in the university commonly known as the top choice of valedictorians and salutatorians from this region of Tennessee.

Add to it the fact that MT's biggest rival in football, Troy, has seen recent success in its football program and a victory over them can help establish MT's growing fan base and burgeoning football program.

The time is now for students, faculty, and Murfreesboro to hop on the bandwagon known as the Blue Raider nation. No longer will games with less than 20,000 people in attendance be excusable.

See Time, 8



The Blue Raiders return to Murfreesboro this weekend to take on Louisiana-Lafayette in the homecoming game. Joe Craddock is coming off of a career day where has had 401 passing yards, the third highest total in Blue Raider history.

Photo by Jay Richardson | Staff Photographer

Craddock, Robinson lead win over ULM

Team returns to .500 thanks to improved play by defense and stability on offensive line

By Chris Martin
Staff Writer

Joe Craddock provided the offensive punch and Bradley Robinson provided the fireworks in Middle Tennessee's 41-40 victory over the University of Louisiana at Monroe Saturday.

ULM (3-6, 3-3 Sun Belt) scored with 57 seconds left in the fourth quarter to give the Warhawks a 40-36 lead. On the ensuing kickoff, Robinson returned the ball 89 yards to score the winning touchdown for the Blue Raiders (5-5, 4-1 SBC).

"The football gods were looking down on us [Saturday] night," MT Head Coach Rick Stockstill said. "We got a big play, and we believed we would. We had a belief in that sideline that the game was never over. As long as time was left, we could win it and we did."

Joe Craddock, making his first start since Sept. 15, helped MT fans forget that freshman quarterback Dwight Dasher was injured by completing 22 of 29 passes for 401 yards and four touchdowns. He also carried the ball 11 times for 70 yards and a touchdown. The red-shirt junior also showed his experience by refusing to be sacked or intercepted. In 10 games this year, MT's quarterbacks have only thrown seven interceptions. Of those seven picks, four came in the first two games of the season.

"To be honest, we came in wanting to run the ball," Craddock said. "The credit for all those yards goes to the other 10 guys with me. I wasn't pressured one time, and our guys caught it and ran with it."

Robinson didn't just contribute with stellar special teams play; he also had three tackles, a pass breakup and an interception. The interception was his fourth of the season and 13th of his career, moving him into a tie for third place all-time at MT.

Despite possessing the top run

defense in the Sun Belt Conference, the Blue Raiders allowed two Warhawks to gain more than 100 yards on the ground. Senior running back Calvin Dawson, the SBC's leading rusher, gained 180 yards and three rushing touchdowns on 47 carries while junior quarterback Kinsmon Lancaster picked up 138 yards on 16 carries. Overall, MT surrendered 360 rushing yards, more than twice the 155.4 yards it was giving up before the game.

Lancaster completed 24 of 38 passes and added 261 passing yards and two touchdowns to go along with his impressive rushing performance.

"Then quarterback was very good," Stockstill said. "He made some great runs and I told him after the game that he played a great game. His ability to pass and run made him tough. We had a real hard time with him. He about just beat us single handed."

Both teams' offenses were running on all cylinders as the teams combined for 1,123 total offensive yards. ULM accounted for 624 of those yards.

"At times it looked good in this one, and at times it looked bad," senior defensive end Erik Walden said. "But we kept fighting, and we'll keep fighting this season."

While the Blue Raiders' defense gave up a lot of yards, they were able to force three turnovers. Robinson and junior cornerback Alex Suber each had an interception and senior linebacker Derek Shropshire had a fumble recovery. Tavaris Jones, who has been slowly moving up the list for most sacks in a career at MT, got one and a half sacks to put him in a tie for fourth place with ULM.

In the losing effort, Dawson set three ULM rushing records. In the third quarter, Dawson became the Warhawks' career-leading rusher. He has rushed for 3,121 yards in his career to become his school's most prolific rusher, overtaking Roosevelt

Sidelines Players of the Week

Offense:

Joe Craddock

QB 5-11 200 pounds, r-Junior

Craddock threw for a career-high 401 yards and a personal-best four touchdowns, including 229 yards in the first half while also rushing for a career-best 70 yards. Craddock's 401 passing yards went down as the third most for a single-game in school history.

Defense:

Bradley Robinson

CB 5-10 175 pounds, r-Senior

Robinson came up with his fourth pick of the year in the fourth quarter. Robinson's 13th career interception moved him into a tie for third place on the all-time list with Ray Oldham and Don Griffin and he needs one more to tie Cedric Stegall for second place. Robinson also ranks third all-time in Sun Belt Conference history with his 13 interceptions and is just one shy of equaling the all-time mark. He also ran back the game-winning kickoff return for a touchdown. This was the first time returning a kickoff in his career.

Potts' old mark of 3,061. Dawson also set the records for most 100-yard rushing games in a career (17) and most 100-yard rushing games in a season (8).

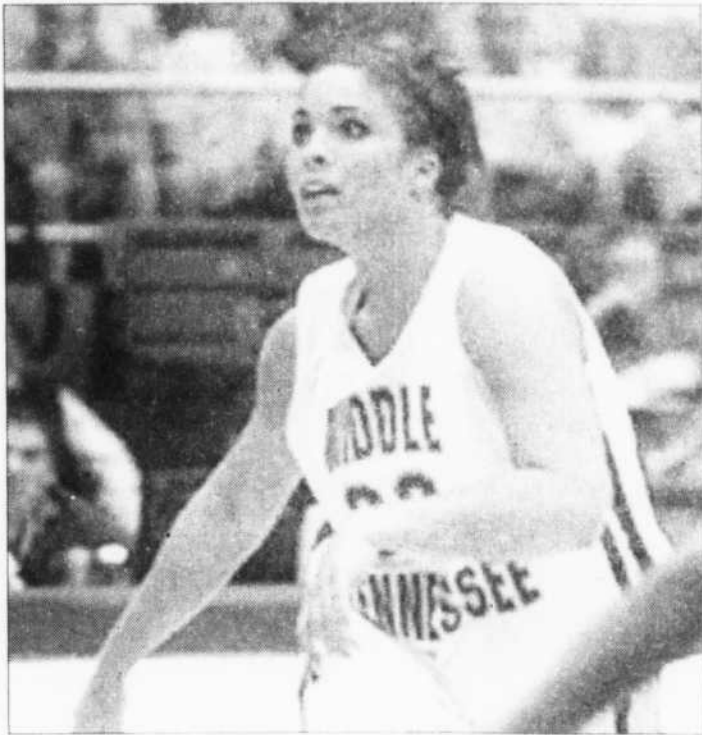
"Yeah, I got the record, but it doesn't mean anything to me without the win," Dawson said.

Wide receivers Jonathan Grigsby and Desmond Gee each turned in career-best performances for the Blue Raiders. Gee caught the ball four times for 139 yards with touchdown receptions of 42 and 66 yards. Grigsby caught two passes

for 109 yards including a 94-yard touchdown reception on MT's second offensive play of the third quarter.

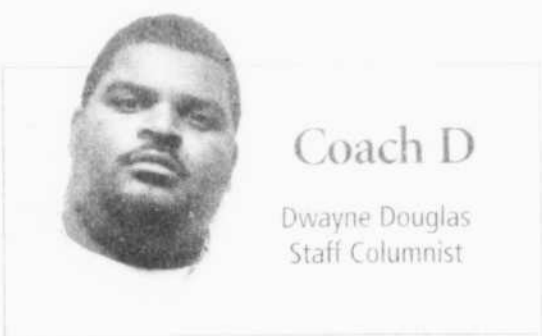
The Blue Raiders, who have won four in a row and five of their last six, will be returning to Floyd Stadium for homecoming this Saturday to take on the Louisiana-Lafayette Ragin' Cajuns (1-8, 1-3 SBC). The game is scheduled to begin at 2:30 p.m. If MT wins, it could set up a SBC champion-deciding bout with Troy, who is undefeated in conference play, on Nov. 20. ♦

The importance of basketball exhibition games



Freshman Anne Marie Lanning started her career with a bang, totaling 18 points on the night in an exhibition game against the University of North Alabama.

Photo by Bradley Lambert | MT Media Relations



Coach D

Dwayne Douglas
Staff Columnist

Do not lose in exhibition play. When you open the season at home, your fans will then be rewarded with a victory. Your team will also start the season on a hot streak.

That is the way the Blue Raiders men's basketball team has played over the past few years.

The team won its exhibition game last season and followed up by winning the next five home games. A similar pattern can be traced back until the '03-'04 season. The year before that played out very differently for the Blue Raiders. The team lost in exhibition play in 02-'03. Next, the team lost its home opener and then 5 out of the following 6 games.

That exhibition loss came at the expense of Global Sports. Coach Kermit Davis said that game was good for the team. "It was full of ex-college

and pro players. One of the best exhibition games they played" said Davis.

The game may have been good for the players, but it could have been bad for the fans.

Some coaches may not see exhibition games as important, but Davis sees many ways to benefit from the games. Players have an opportunity to "get under the lights," Davis said. The coach believes that exhibition is a way to get new guys ready for the season. He also sees it as a way to prepare returning players who have been away from that game feeling for a while.

Another benefit of exhibition games is that coaches can use it for trial and error with certain players. "Regular season tends to get the top eight or nine playing. Exhibition play allows for a lot of combinations," Davis said.

He also spoke on how it is important to give all players a chance, but said playing time is based on what the players have done leading up to the game. In practice, he takes notice of those who play through fatigue and injury. Those players will see more minutes in exhibition play.

"[Exhibition games] are not overrated and they are much needed," Davis said. He realizes the games and stats are not highly publicized, but said the

See Exhibitions, 8



4
days

remaining until

Middle Tennessee vs. Western Kentucky

7 pm - Alumni Memorial Gym, MTSU



Common names, common objectives

By Clarence Plank

Staff Writer

The team was getting ready for practice. Friday was the start of the final three games of the volleyball season with the last home game against Western Kentucky this weekend. The Blue Raiders will be looking for support from the whole team, and courage from all of the players that will see playing time. It is a steady race and three girls name Ashley are ready to face any challenge as a team.

Ashley Adams, Ashley Asberry and Ashley Mead sit down for a brief interview before practice where the start of teamwork is very important along with their close friendship off the court.

This is evident when they were called to do their interview on the court as Asberry and Adams playfully nudged and pushed each other in order to be interviewed first.

"Interview me first, Clarence," Asberry said as she broke Adams' hold. Adams calmly explained to Asberry that this was a team interview.

Sitting in a circle on a steel bench in the Alumni Memorial Gym, Adams spoke first as Asberry and Mead watched the team work hitting drills.

"It's sort of every hour of the day together and some of us have classes together," Adams said. "Practice, games and meals. It's almost how much time we spend together practicing. We come together, in a way to cope with problems. If we're having a hard time. We're doing it together it definitely helps us out on the court."

Asberry was watching the team and made a couple of comments to one of her teammates on the court, who was trying to spike the ball.

"We are really good friends with each other," Asberry said. "We're just not teammates we have strong friendships."

Adams and Mead agreed with Asberry.

Their friendship helps them handle problems on the court as a team when another player is struggling because they missed a block, a dig, or just made a mistake.

Sometimes they are more aware of the their mistakes and come down harder on themselves more because being an athlete means doing their best for the team.

"It's different," Adams said. "We just bring the team together after losing a point, or lost play. Some people on the team respond to being yelled at. Coaches yell at them. I want to be encouraged. I don't want to be yelled at. I know what I did wrong because I'll do better next time and most of the time we know what we did wrong. So other people are just telling you over again."

They all laughed, saying "yeah, yeah" in response to what they might say when told that they made the mistake.

"I don't think we get down on ourselves in a game," Mead said. "We have a more developed trust in each other to do our own job or whatever our job is so we have that trust there, but we have that extra confidence on the court as we play. We know we have everybody's back in everything we do and we support each other; it makes it that much easier to play."

As a threesome they feel that blocking is the thing

See Ashley, 8

Dynasty in the making?



Middle Tennessee's volleyball has made a name for themselves in the past few seasons, earning a conference championship and wins over Ohio State and Oklahoma, both ranked at the time.

By Clarence Plank

Staff Writer

Both prior matches had been decided by two points and they were tired. The crowd was behind the home team, chanting, screaming, banging on the stands and trying to get into the head of the opposing team.

It was working — they sensed another conference win was close. The frustration of playing a team that will not give up, nor falter during conference play, is a hard challenge.

Both teams entered the game as the only two undefeated teams remaining in the Sun Belt Conference.

The lead changed hands 10 times in game three with the last tying point coming off a kill by outside hitter Ashley Adams, pulling the Blue Raiders to a 15-15 tie with Western Kentucky.

Then a costly error by Middle Tennessee set the Lady Toppers up for a 4-0 run and then another run of 8-2 to put the game out of reach. Match point was awarded to Western Kentucky for a 3-0 sweep, adding another moment in the rivalry between WKU and MT.

The volleyball season is winding down for the Blue Raiders and with it a chance at another conference title, but only this time with them

taking sole possession of the Sun Belt Conference title after WKU lost another conference game.

MT is coming off a sweep of both Florida Atlantic and Florida International last weekend and has a chance to continue their success against South Alabama and Troy this weekend.

As of this moment, MT (26-2, 13-1) holds a one game lead over Western Kentucky (23-6, 12-2) with only three games remaining on the schedule. The final game of the season will be against the Lady Toppers at the Alumni Memorial Gym on Friday Nov. 9 at 7 p.m. The Lady Toppers have been the rival for Middle Tennessee since the Blue Raiders joined the Sun Belt Conference in 2000. So no matter what sport the Blue Raiders are playing they face a tough WKU team that has taken on the role of a heel and, as always, the team that can break a fan's heart when the playoffs begin.

WKU has lost two games in conference play to New Orleans and more recently Florida International who gave the Lady Toppers their first eastern division loss, sweeping them 3-0.

The last time the Blue Raiders and WKU played each other this season the Lady Toppers swept MT 3-0 in Bowling Green, KY. It was the first time in a series that MT had been shutout since Florida Atlantic on October 27, 2006.

This year around MT has to win in order to receive their own outright conference title and claim a 10-0 record, one seed in the SBC Championship at a Denver Col. on Nov 15.

WKU has won or shared the conference regular season title since 2000 and has won the SBC tournament championship in 2002 and 2005.

MT is the young upstart going into next week's match against WKU. The Blue Raiders are 4-12 against the Lady Toppers since joining the SBC in 2000 but MT has started to figure out how to beat the Blue Raiders over the past two seasons have pushed the games to four or more matches before winning in four at the end of last season, 3-1 over WKU. The Lady Toppers were knocked out of the SBC Championships by IU before falling to MT in the SBC finals.

Western Kentucky head coach Travis Hudson commented after their win over MT that he has a lot respect for the [Blue Raiders] and that [MT] are a sweet to school. Hudson also mentioned that there should be more berths for multiple teams from the SBC going into the NCAA tournament.

The Blue Raiders get ready to spike the ball on WKU on Friday Nov. 9 at 7 p.m. at the Alumni Memorial Gym ♦

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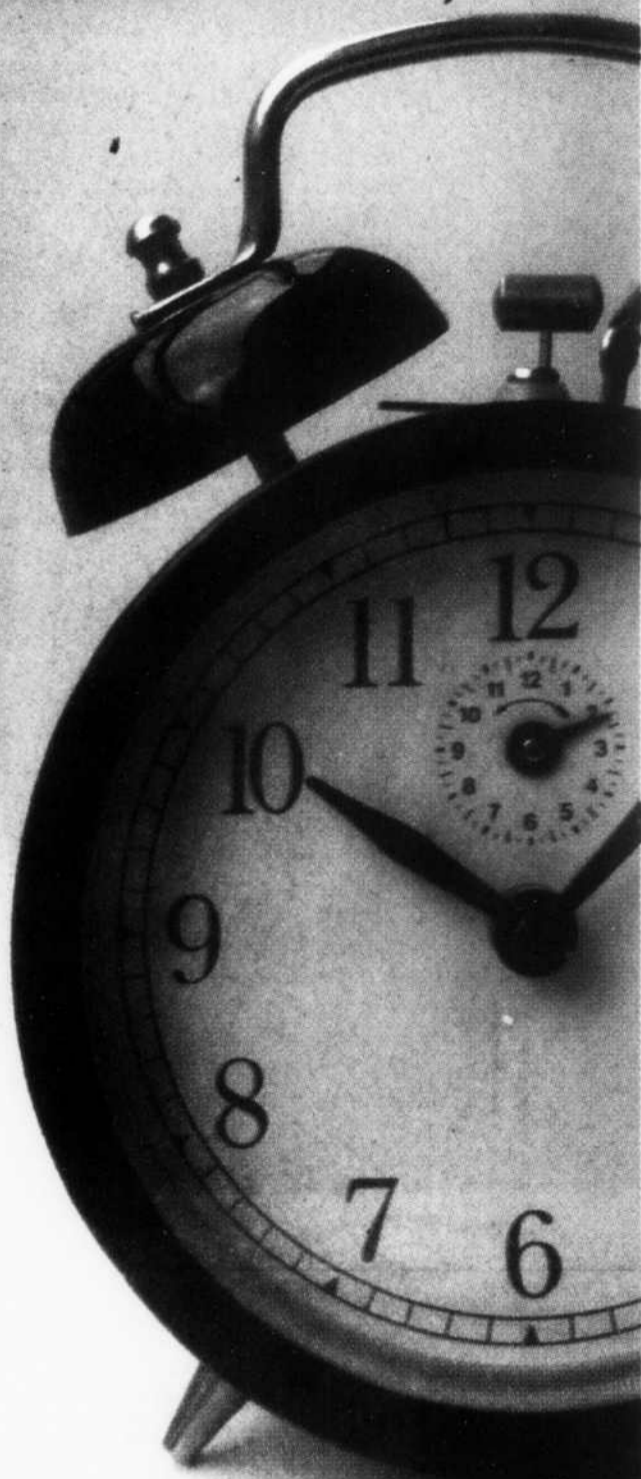
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I am Sportacus

J. Owen Shipley
Sports Editor

It's 5:00 p.m. on a Sunday; week in, week out, this is a time I spend in the office trying to finish up the Sports page for Monday. Instead of sitting in that uncomfortable green swivel chair at my desk, I'm arched into a stiff foldout at Stone Crest Medical Center.

It's been 10 months since I last tried to type a column from a hospital, and it feels like so much has changed. I'm sitting next to my father, with more tubes coming in and out of him than a Hummer during an emissions test, and he's once again recovering from surgery.

And, in a coincidence more bizarre than I can account for, the Colts and Patriots are on the TV again. If you read my work last year you hopefully caught a column entitled "I Am Sportacus, Son of Ronald." It's my favorite thing I've ever written.

As the headline shows, this is clearly a sequel of sorts to that column, but it's much more than an update on my father. This is an amendment to a column I wrote about the significance of sports in all of our lives.

Less than a week before the Colts met the Patriots in the AFC championship game last year, my father almost died. I went from nearly losing one of the most important people in my world, to being able to watch football with him, at least one last time. That playoff game meant more to me than any four-hour period before or since ever has.

And now, nearly a year later, Papa Sportacus is recovering from the final surgery of that horrib-

ic ordeal. In a few weeks everything will be back to normal. Despite the irony of watching the same two teams, from the same hospital, I'm struck by one thought. I was wrong when I wrote that column.

What I didn't realize last year was that sports are more than just a way to bond with our fathers or friends.

Yes, sports do give us the chance to cheer together when nothing is going right in our real lives and they allow us to cry together when we don't have the words to say what's really wrong. They offer a distraction, a chance at reconciliation, and a way to make friends in a new place.

But more than anything else – for a true sports fan – they can force us to bond with ourselves; to remember that life is worth cheering for. It really is.

The mundanity and annoyance of everyday life can be hard to take sometimes. It wears down on us and can make anyone feel worthless, but it takes only the slightest of distractions to bring it all back into focus. How about a local example?

Joe Gradock had been waiting for a chance to prove himself for years. As a redshirt junior he struggled to stay healthy enough to earn a starting spot. Once he finally started, the skill of the teams he played against and the youth of his team ultimately exposed him for another injury. After being replaced – and really, what in life is more painful than being replaced? – he kept a good attitude and watched Dwight Dasher win game after game.

And then, he watched the Dash go down last week late in the first half.

For seven days, talk of Craddock's rusty performance in the second half was all over this town. He could have bought into it but he didn't. He didn't let the doubt and fear that nags at all of us keep him from preparing, from believing.

When his first full start since LSU ended on Saturday night, Craddock finished with 401 yards, 4 touchdowns, and no interceptions. When the world got down on him, he played the best game of his career and that is why sports are the eternal metaphor for American life. Not a day goes by when we aren't given a sports metaphor to describe a totally pathetic situation.

"Life is a game. If it takes a football player or game to remind me that only I can control the outcome, only I can decide how much fun I have before the clock hits double goose eggs... so be it. I'll see you straight-at work. I have some cheering to do.

J. Owen Shipley is a senior English major. He can be reached at myspace.com/iamtransportatus.

Exhibitions: Men's basketball getting ready

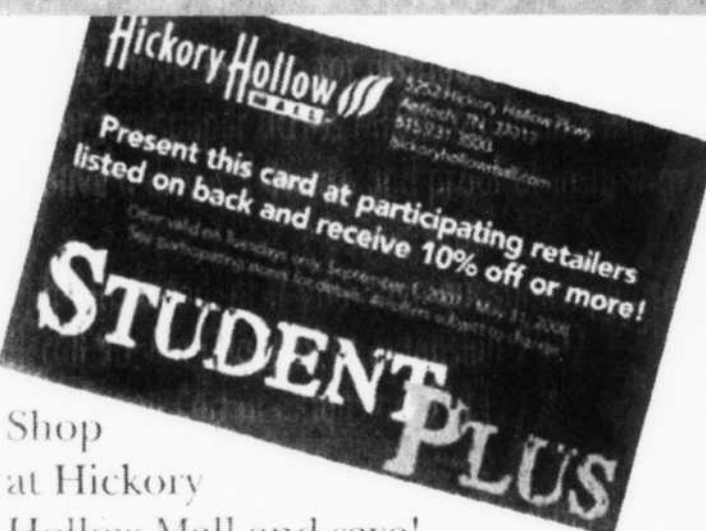
Continued from 6

games are useful. He then mentioned the team could get a lot by playing a scrimmage game as well. "One scrimmage and one exhibition is plenty," he said.

The MT football program has been hampered by injuries all season. Some of those occurred during the season, but several noticeable injuries also occurred before the season started. But Davis is not one to con-

the Murphy Center on Thursday night. While Davis may be watching to get a look at different combinations, fans may be watching to get some insight on what to expect a week later when the team opens at home against San Jose State.

Dwayne Douglas is a senior, education and behavioral science major and can be reached at tdd2a@mtsu.edu.



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