



Drizzle

MT only conference
school below average

page 6

Radio free
Nashville

in [flash]

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SIDELINES

Middle Tennessee State University

2003 National Finalist
Best non-daily
university newspaper
-Society of Professional Journalists

Volume 80 No. 33

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Students react to Bush victory

By Erica Rodefer
Campus News Editor

Yesterday's election results left some MTSU students feeling hopeful for the future of our nation, while others said they view it as the beginning of the end.

Either way, it was hard to find anyone who didn't express strong feelings about President George W. Bush's re-election after Sen. John Kerry's gave his concession speech at around 11 a.m. yesterday.

"I've got a lot of emotions right now, I can tell you that," said College Democrats President Christy Holden. "Last night, I pretty much cried."

Of course, Justin Owen, president of the Raider Republicans, was more than pleased with the results.

"I'm feeling very good. It's a great victory for the country, for President Bush," said Justin Owen, president of the Raider Republicans. "He'll really be able to push his agenda forward now that we've gained some seats in the Senate."

Republicans gained a total of 11 seats in Congress, seven in the House and four in the Senate.

Most notably, Tom Daschle, the minority leader in the U.S. Senate lost his seat to Republican John Thune.

Daschle has been a member of Congress since he was elected to a U.S. House of Representative seat in 1978. Holden said she is most concerned about the state of the economy and the possibility of a draft that will have another term as president.

"The economy's going to go to hell," she said. "I really think we're going to hit a depression. I feel strongly about that."

Most members of the College Democrats are shocked, she said.

"We didn't think that the American people could be this stupid," Holden said.

Holden said that the Raider Republicans plan to take a break and then gear up for an election of their own. They will be electing new executive officers in about three weeks.

"We'll be recruiting more and doing some more laid-back stuff because we won't be so busy working on election stuff," Owen said.

The Bush victory has not changed the minds of several Kerry supporters on campus.

"I'm think it's going to be more of the same," said Justin Love, a marketing student, quoting a catch phrase coined by the Kerry campaign.

But he isn't going to give up hope just yet.

"I'm hopeful," said Love, who is from Alabama. "I think it didn't really matter which was elected because they were both

See React, 2



Photo by Jay Richardson | Staff Photographer

Jim Tracy celebrates his victory over Larry Trail at Bluesboro Tuesday night.

Tracy discusses plans for term

By Alex Miller
Staff Writer

Jim Tracy became the first Republican to win the 16th district state Senate seat on Tuesday night. His success, along with a victory by Diane Black, who also unseated an incumbent Democrat, gave the Republicans control of the state Senate in Tennessee.

Tracy has already begun to plan his agenda. Tracy named tort reform and a taxpayer bill-of-rights his top priorities. He

campaigned on repealing the 1 percent sales tax increase, but he won't move swiftly to do away with it.

"We'll evaluate the situation," he said.

He attributed his victory to hard work.

"We knocked on over 15,000 doors," he said. "We met people, looked them in the eye."

Tuesday night, Tracy credited the Raider Republicans for contributing to his victory. He said he believed that faith and morality played a role in his vic-

tory, as well as in Republican victories nationwide.

"People are voting their beliefs and values more than ever before," he said.

Democratic Gov. Phil Bredesen held a press conference on Wednesday and commented on the shift in power in the state Senate.

"Certainly the (current) Senate has not displayed a lot of what I would call party discipline, where there are a lot of votes along party lines," Bredesen said. "I believe I'll

work just fine with the Senate as I did with the one that was slightly different in its makeup."

Tracy won by a margin of more than 3,000 votes. He beat Trail in all three of the counties that comprise the district - Rutherford, Moore and Bedford.

Tracy received 51.7 percent of the vote, compared to Trail's 48.3 percent, according to figures released Wednesday morning by the Tennessee Election Commission. ♦

Native notes

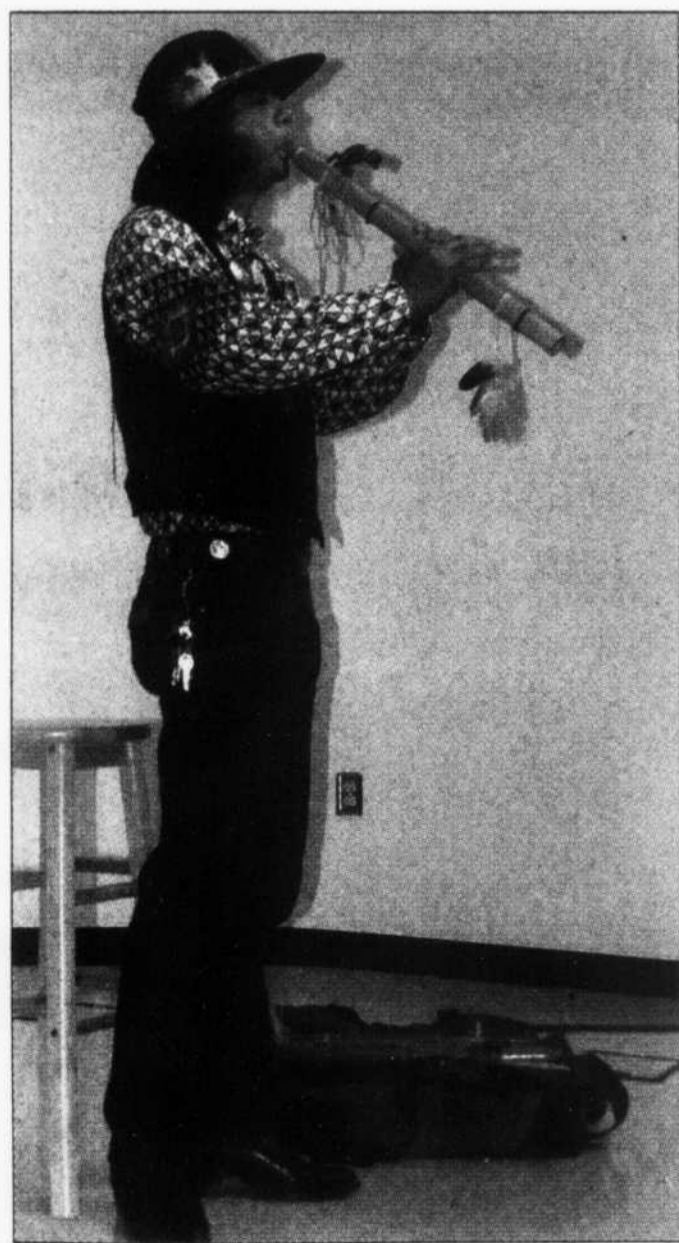


Photo by Jay Richardson | Staff Photographer

Mike Serna plays the traditional flute at the Native American Folk Music showcase yesterday.

Dunn remembered with scholarship

By Nona Kempton
Staff Writer

A memorial scholarship will be established to honor Laura McComb Dunn, an MTSU graduate and development coordinator for campus jazz radio station WMOT, the station's general manager said.

Dunn, 44, died suddenly on Oct. 17 of an inoperable brain aneurysm.

"She always had a smile on her face," said John High, the station's manager. "She always came to work with a smile and left with one, too. She was just a trooper."



Dunn

offered to students "primarily involved with the radio station."

High said that Dunn began her radio career at the station during her freshman year in 1978. She worked for WMOT until she graduated in 1982.

He said Dunn returned to

WMOT in 1985 as the development coordinator. He said her job responsibilities included fund raising for the station, soliciting grants and corporate underwriting and helping students learn the business of radio.

"She had a passion for helping students get their first gig in the business," High said. "She was working with eight students this year. Students were lining up to work with her because she let them do real work and not just chase down coffee."

High said that the eight full-time employees at the station have felt like they have lost a

member of their family.

"The last person that joined our staff started here 16 years ago," High said. "This is like a family."

Freshman recording industry major Bethni Spears said she knew Dunn before she came to MTSU. Spears said she decided to work at the radio station because of Dunn.

"I always wanted to come to MTSU, but working with Laura was icing on the cake," Spears said. "She was my friend before she was my boss. She was a beautiful person inside and

See Dunn, 2

McCown presents excerpt from novel

By Hillary Robson
Staff Writer

Acclaimed novelist and poet Clint McCown read an excerpt from his newest novel "The Weatherman" at the Hazelwood Dining Room in the James Union Building Monday.

The reading was sponsored by the Distinguished Lecture Series and organized in part by English associate professor Ron Kates.

McCown, who currently teaches creative writing at Virginia Commonwealth University, has published three novels and two books of prose. He has been nominated for and won many awards, including two nominations for a Pulitzer

Prize in fiction.

Previous distinctions include a two-time nod for the American Fiction Prize. "The Weatherman" was awarded the Gabel Prize by publisher Graywolf Press.

"Every [award and nomination received] has meant something important to me," McCown said.

Kates invited McCown to MTSU. Kates uses McCown's sophomore novel "War Memorials" as part of his honors college classes' curriculum. Kates has a unique "Revisiting the Hometown" course that included the study and discussion of McCown's work.

"War Memorials" is set in nearby Fayetteville, Tenn., and

deals with the protagonist's strained relationship with his war veteran father and the impact of war on small-town identity.

"Any chance I get come back to this area, I take advantage of it," McCown said. "More than that, I really appreciate what Ron Kates has been doing with my book... I hadn't thought of the book in terms of its being a representative of hometown-based art."

In a series of visits with Kates' classes, McCown was asked thoughtful questions about his writing and the relationship between life experience and using those experiences in writing fiction.

"It gave me a new way to

look at the book, and it was wonderful to get to get to come down here and interact with the book," McCown said.

McCown delivered the first chapter of "The Weatherman" to a captivated audience of students and faculty.

Set in Alabama, the novel deals with one man's struggle to recover from witnessing a heinous crime committed one summer afternoon in 1963.

"I can trace 15 years worth of nightmares and paranoia and, oddly enough, academic obsession back to a particular moment in my life. A single incident on a summer morning in a freight yard, where I'd gone

See McCown, 2



This week's poll question at
www.mtsusidelines.com

What did you do for Halloween?

Opinions 4 ¥Sports 5 ¥Classifieds 7 ¥[flash] inside

Hay day



Photo by Steve Cross | Chief Photographer

Jameson plays in the hay with Marcy Duggin, a Project HELP volunteer at last week's Project HELP Fall Festival.

Liberals, conservatives explained by history

By Erika Decker
Staff Writer

History professor Susan Myers-Shirk addressed the development of morality and its impact on American culture, especially politics, in "God, Sex, and Pop Culture" Monday.

Myers-Shirk went through the history and development of conservative and liberal ideology in an effort to help better understand where each of these present-day schools of thought come from.

"If we want to understand our contemporary use of the words conservative and liberal, we ought to go back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries and look at the American response to industrial capitalism," Myers-Shirk said.

She explained that though liberal and conservative Christians are of the same faith, they can be very different in their political orientation.

"A liberal Christian in their moral orientation has more in common with a liberal Muslim or a liberal Jew than they do with conservatives in their own circles," she said.

Myers-Shirk then went through the main views of both liberals and conservatives in the late 19th century and early 20th century.

She explained that liberals looked at science as a tool for the advancement of society, saw human nature as basically good and felt that through a moral effort, humans could improve themselves.

They also focused on the relief of human suffering, which fit in with the progressive movement in the United States at the time. Liberals believed in

"The tendency of each side to see the other as morally bankrupt can preclude meaningful political debate."

— Susan Myers-Shirk
History professor

expanding the democracy and that the government had a responsibility to help create a moral society.

Myers-Shirk said that as time passed, the liberal view on some of these issues shifted.

By 1945 liberals were not as confident in science because of the use of technology in World War II.

Another emerging ideal was that true morality is not so much a matter of moral standards but something that comes from the individual's heart.

The liberal opinion of governmental responsibility also changed. It went from wanting to make sure people were moral to allowing people to achieve their potential and allowing personal freedom.

Myers-Shirk said conservatives felt that science could be a kind of threat, saw humans as wicked by nature, but believed the grace of Christ could save them and emphasized tradition, hierarchy and biblical revelations.

They felt that saving human souls was a more pressing matter than relieving suffering because suffering is only a temporary condition, but the soul is eternal.

Conservatives were not politically involved and felt that the government should take a laissez-faire, or hands off, approach to the way it governed, and placed an emphasis on the work ethic.

Later, conservatives began to incorporate science into their

views rather than shun it. This is evident in the emergence of Creationism as an answer to the theory of evolution.

Also, the separation from politics began to disappear as conservatives began to be more involved in political matters.

As she closed the lecture, Myers-Shirk explained that knowing the history of both sides can help one to better understand the thinking behind the conservative and liberal points of view.

"We learn liberals have values. Values are not the exclusive purview of conservatives, as some politicians would have you believe," she said. "We learn that conservatives have values. Values are not the exclusive purview of liberals as some politicians would have you believe."

Myers-Shirk said it is important that one understand this point because these misunderstandings can stifle the political process.

"The tendency of each side to see the other as morally bankrupt can preclude meaningful political debate," she said, "and Americans who... believe in democracy cannot afford such a breakdown in civil discourse."

She closed with these points in the hope that those in the lecture hall would vote on Tuesday.

"Vote your values believing that the other Americans who are out there voting are going to vote their values," she said. ♦

CRIME LOG

Compiled By Erica Rodefer - Campus News Editor

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Wednesday, Oct. 27 – 12:42 a.m.
Alumni Drive
Vagrancy
Marcos A. Gibon, 23, of Dickson, Tenn., was arrested for criminal trespassing.</p> <p>Wednesday, Oct. 27 – 12:50 p.m.
Peck Hall
Theft under \$500
Complainant reported her backpack stolen. Later, she said she found her backpack, but her books were missing.</p> <p>Wednesday, Oct. 27 – 1:56 p.m.
Smith Hall
Warrants
William Taylor, 23, of Murfreesboro was arrested for criminal contempt and violation of bond conditions.</p> <p>Friday, Oct. 29 – 10:53 a.m.
Keathley University Center
Indecent exposure
Enrico Harris, 18, of Lavergne, was arrested for indecent exposure. The complainant identified Harris as the male that had exposed himself to her when she was walking on the street by the Keathley University Center.</p> <p>Saturday, Oct. 30 – 10:41 a.m.
Maintenance Lot
Warrants
Subject was taken into custody after it was determined that he was involved in an assault and theft, was driving on a suspended license and had active warrants for assault and theft under \$500.</p> | <p>Saturday, Oct. 30 – 2:18 p.m.
Baird Lane at East Main
Subject was driving on a suspended license.</p> <p>Sunday, Oct. 31 – 5:06 p.m.
Corlew Hall
Assault
It was reported that there was an assault and stabbing in a dorm room. The investigation is pending for this case.</p> <p>Sunday, Oct. 31 – 8:58 p.m.
Kappa Sigma fraternity house
Vandalism
Complainant reported a basketball-shaped hole through the window.</p> <p>Sunday, Oct. 31 – 10:23 p.m.
Womack Lane Apartments
Harassment
Complainant reported a harassing phone call.</p> <p>Monday, Nov. 1 – 12:44 a.m.
Cyber Café at Woodmore
Assault
Subject reported that a former employee threatened a current employee.</p> <p>Monday, Nov. 1 – 11:24 a.m.
Wright Music Building
Theft under \$500
Complainant reported a bicycle stolen.</p> |
|--|--|

To report a crime, call Campus Police at 898-2424.

React: Some unaffected by election results, concession

Continued from 1

kind of stuck in this [situation]."

Physical education major April Piper said she's concerned that the economy will get worse in the next four years now that Bush has won the election.

"As far as jobs being out there, there haven't been as many [since Bush has taken office]," Piper said. "Democratic presidents are better for the economy."

McCown: Forum followed reading

Continued from 1

to steal coal from abandoned railroad cars," McCown read from the first chapter of *The Weatherman*.

The reading concluded with an open forum discussion, where attendees discussed the reading. Following the hour-long session, an off-campus

Piper also expressed concern over financial aid and increasing tuition costs.

Several students also said they were happy that Bush will be leading the nation.

Freshman undecided major Brook King said she was not surprised by the results.

"I wanted Bush to win because I agree with the war on terrorism," she said. "Bush will try to make the world a better place."

Still others feel like the outcome of the election simply

will not affect their everyday lives enough to worry about it.

"I'm kind of in a bubble," said junior recording industry major James Moore. "I'm kind of oblivious."

Moore said he is not old enough to worry about Medicare or Social Security issues.

While he said he is a little bit concerned about the possibility of a draft, he doesn't see that as a cause for concern.

"There's always Canada," he said. ♦

reception was held in McCown's honor.

In addition to the reading and classroom visits, McCown hosted a writer's question and answer session Monday at Peck Hall. Topics highlighted the challenges of creative writing and McCown's influences from the creative writing world.

McCown has recently com-

pleted a book of poetry and serves on the editorial board for the *Colorado Review*. He is still brainstorming his next novel, which he tentatively plans to set in Fayetteville.

"The Weatherman" is available at most major booksellers, online and through publisher Graywolf Press at their Web site, www.graywolf.com. ♦

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Need to let the campus know about an event your group is sponsoring?

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Campus Events

The following guidelines apply to all:

1. Forms must be submitted by deadline to be considered for publication. Campus Events run each Monday in the Living section, so forms should be submitted by Saturday night.
2. Every attempt will be made to run your announcement as often as possible, but priority will be given to events with the most immediacy.
3. We reserve the right to limit announcements to campus events only.
4. Sidelines does not guarantee placement of any submission.

Name of person placing this notice _____ Date _____

Organization _____ Event _____

Date of event _____ Time _____ Location _____

Contact name _____ Phone no. _____

Notes _____

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County, city at odds over interchange

By Laura Lindsay
Staff Writer

Throughout the city of Murfreesboro roads have become more congested each year, and land is being developed for more businesses and residences. The city expects this growth to sustain and is making decisions to accommodate residents and prepare for expansion.

Murfreesboro and Rutherford County have been working together to encourage this development. However, a conflict recently arose over the location of an interchange which will connect Broad Street with Cherry Lane. On Oct. 7 the Murfreesboro City Council approved annexation of 130 acres near State Route 840 because they plan to develop this interchange on a portion of the property.

The property owner, Rutherford County resident Jeanette Chadic, had intended to develop a subdivision at the location. She was able to purchase the land because the county has not included the proposed interchange on its final version of an urban growth map. The county decided not to put the interchange on the map because county residents had spoken out against the necessity of the interchange.

"The county took the position that they were going to listen to the constituents," Rutherford County Assistant Planning Director Scott Phares said. "The Rutherford County Planning Commission had so much public outcry at its meetings. I mean, they were hostile meetings."

"And the people in that area were very upset that the city did not listen to them," he added. "I represent them, and we need to listen to them."

Phares said that after listening to residents who did not want the interchange, the county removed it from their map. He said there is already a link to get traffic over to State Route 840. The projected interchange would go over that Sulphur Springs interchange. He said the county did not think two interchanges were needed.

Murfreesboro planner Robert Lewis said the city left the interchange on the map because it was needed. He said the five-lane road would go through State Route 840 connecting from Memorial Boulevard to Broad Street. It would, he said, create a direct route.

"The city needs this to relieve traffic congestion which everybody already complains about now," Lewis said. "We are serious about keeping the major thoroughfare plan open so we can try to relieve some of the congestion around town."

Phares said that the county and the city used the same consultant, Fischbach Transportation Group. The consultant, he said, allowed the

county to take the interchange off its map.

"If that link is as critical as people are saying it is, the consultant should have told the Rutherford County Planning Commission not to remove it," Phares said. "She should have said, 'Don't remove it. It is a critical element to this plan. If you remove it you will be jeopardizing traffic capacity, traffic flow for the next 20 or 30 years.'"

Population increasing

Murfreesboro	
2000.....	68,816
2004.....	73,148
2020*.....	126,838
Rutherford County	
2000.....	182,023
2004.....	199,057
2020*.....	367,135

*Projected

Murfreesboro and Rutherford County have both projected a large population growth spanning over the next 15 years. According to census information, this year the population projection in Murfreesboro is 73,148, and 199,057 in Rutherford County. Since 2000, the city's population has risen almost 13 percent coupled with a 14 percent county-wide increase.

By 2020, it is expected that the population in the city will increase to 126,838 and rise to 367,135 throughout the county. This is more than a 40 percent increase from the 2004 figures.

Murfreesboro, in coordination with Rutherford County, has developed a 25-year urban growth plan which has included developing a map outlining the city lines surrounded by a designated Urban Growth Area where the county and city have overlapping access.

Expanding from the Urban Growth Area is the bordering portion of the county that has separate services from and is not accessible for city planning. However, there are proposals to build additional roads. Phares said the "proposal just happened to be in the county's jurisdiction, but not the city's." He also said this is a unique situation.

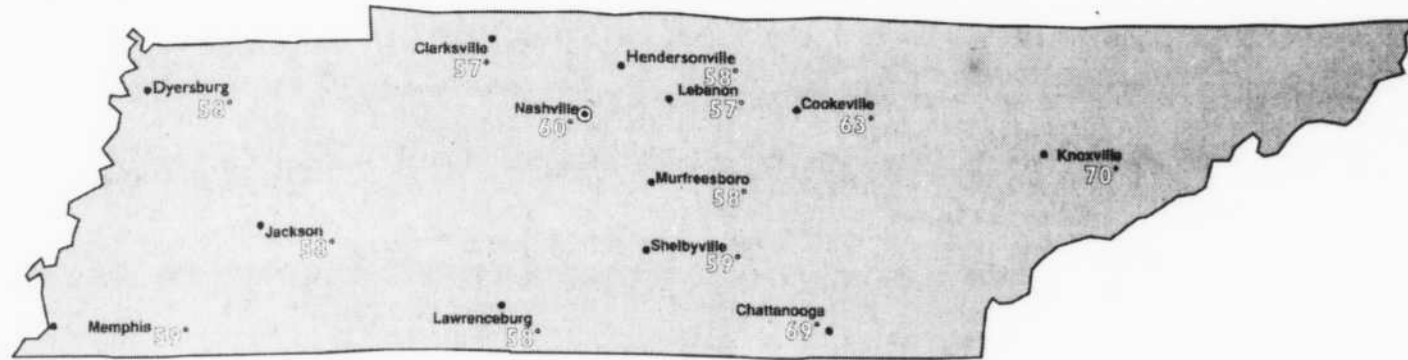
Lewis said this route was chosen because a lot of subdivisions are planned for the area, which will generate traffic.

He said there will be an interchange at Manson Pike and Highway 99 next year. These roads, he said, are "going to change the traffic patterns."

"These changes can affect people's lives, but at the same time a lot of people want to develop in Murfreesboro," Lewis said. "Twenty-five years ago the city didn't look like it does now. It has changed a lot, and it will again over the next 25 years." ♦

Tennessee Weather – Thursday's Highs

From the Associated Press



Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
57° ▲ 31° ▼	60° ▲ 39° ▼	65° ▲ 45° ▼	64° ▲ 43° ▼	57° ▲ 43° ▼

Europe offers to let bygones be bygones; seeks new beginning with Bush, hopes for policy changes

By John Leicester
Associated Press Writer

PARIS – European allies alienated by President Bush's first four years in power offered Wednesday to let bygones be bygones, saying they want to work with the new administration and seeking, right from Day 1, to get the new White House to listen more to overseas opinion.

French President Jacques Chirac, in a congratulatory letter, said he hoped Bush's second term "will be the occasion for strengthening the French-American friendship."

"We will be unable to find satisfying responses to the numerous challenges that confront us today without a close trans-Atlantic partnership," wrote Chirac. He addressed the letter to "Dear George."

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, who also clashed with Bush over Iraq, wrote the president a congratulatory letter expressing "great expectations" for renewed cooperation.

"The world stands before great challenges at the beginning of your second term: international terrorism, the danger of weapons of mass destruction, regional crises – but also poverty, climate change and epidemics threaten our security and stability," Schroeder wrote. "These challenges can only be mastered together."

Another critic of the Iraq war, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero said his government wants "a relationship of efficient, constructive cooperation with the U.S. government and with President Bush, respecting the ideas of each side."

Zapatero, who angered Washington by withdrawing

Spanish troops from Iraq, stayed up most of the night to watch as Republican red crept across the U.S. electoral map.

Election interest in Europe was intense, as was the disappointment many felt over Bush's victory. Some saw it as proof that Europe and the United States are further apart than ever.

"There is a major and lasting lack of understanding between the American people and the rest of the world, in both directions," said Hubert Vedrine, a former French foreign minister. "Almost all nations, with perhaps three or four exceptions, wanted change."

Others worried that Bush, strengthened by a bigger win than in 2000 and backed by a Republican Congress, would turn a deaf ear to world concerns.

"Europe will continue to criticize Bush the same way as earlier," said Swedish Prime Minister Goeran Persson. "But I do not believe that he will be more willing to listen."

Bush allies in the war on terror took comfort in continuity.

"From our point of view, the Bush administration is a known quantity," said Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer. "We've had a very good relationship with them for the last four years and I'm sure we'll be able to keep building on that over the next four."

Russian President Vladimir Putin said a Bush victory would mean the American people had not given in to terrorist threats.

"I would feel happy that the American people have not allowed themselves to be scared and made the decision they considered reasonable," Putin said at a Kremlin news conference after talks with Italian

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

"Bush will keep up that policy that gives the United States the role of promoting freedom in the world," Berlusconi said.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair pledged to work with Bush in the war on terrorism and in revitalizing the Middle East peace process, and called on Europe and the United States to "build anew their alliance" after strains created by the Iraq war.

"A world that is fractured, divided and uncertain must be brought together to fight this global terrorism in all its forms and to recognize that it will not be defeated by military might alone but also by demonstrating the strength of our common values, by bringing freedom and democracy to Iraq as we have done to Afghanistan, by pursuing with the same energy peace in the Middle East between Israel and Palestine," Blair said.

But even among these supporters, there were appeals for Bush to work on healing the trans-Atlantic rift.

"It is not natural to have – maybe not a cold war – but, in any case, a chilling of relations along these lines," said Polish Prime Minister Marek Belka. "I hope that European leaders and President Bush will show initiative in this area."

The prime minister of Denmark, which has 501 troops in the southern Iraqi city of Basra, said his nation will "stay there as long as needed," but added that the overall goal was "to get out of Iraq."

Hungary, meanwhile, announced it would withdraw its 300 non-combat troops from Iraq by the end of March.

Its government has been under mounting pressure from citizens and opposition parties

who object to the soldiers' presence.

An ailing Yasser Arafat congratulated Bush and expressed hope that a second term would help give a new spark to the Middle East peace process, an aide to the Palestinian leader said.

Arafat "declares the readiness of the Palestinian leadership to cooperate and work with (Bush) to resume political efforts to bring about peace and the establishment of a Palestinian state based on the president's vision" in the road map, Arafat aide Mohammed Rashid said.

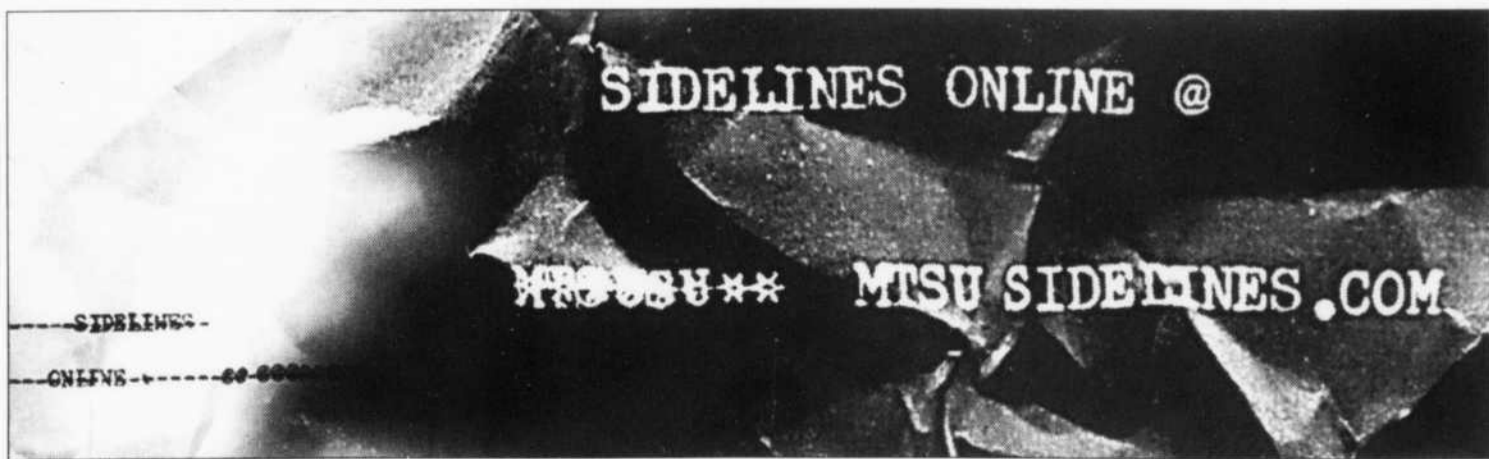
Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's top adviser, Raanan Gissin, called Bush's re-election a victory for a "relentless fight against terrorism."

Leaders from nations throughout Latin American and the Caribbean expressed willingness Wednesday to work closely with the White House, despite near-universal public opposition to the Iraq war and concerns about U.S. trade policy.

Even Venezuela, whose government has openly criticized the Bush administration, expressed its intention to reverse tense and often angry relations with the United States.

"We won't see the United States as an enemy, as an adversary, but as a very important country in the region with which Venezuela has extraordinary relations in terms of petroleum, in terms of the war on drugs," Venezuelan Vice President Jose Vicente said.

But Rangel added that President Hugo Chavez would continue to speak out against the war in Iraq and would keep fighting "against imperialism." ♦



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Ad Council

Second Bush term disappointing for nation

From the Editorial Board Put grudges behind, bring troops home

Let's hope for some peace. All of the votes are in and there is no question this year. All the talking heads on CNN can now go home and shut up for once.

Now that President George W. Bush has won both the popular vote and the Electoral College, there are some wounded feelings for those who supported Sen. John Kerry. It's tough to follow those highs and lows with your candidate of choice for months (the primaries, the Howard Dean Scream, the convention and debates) and then accept that it's all over.

But in the interest of the entire nation, we need to start to build an understanding between the divided factions of the Republican and Democratic parties. Whether you like it or not, we are a country in the middle of the war and we're going to be stuck there if the Democrats act like angry children who refuse to play nicely with others. The only way we can bring our troops home as possible is through a unified political landscape.

As Kerry said in his concession speech, "We must join in common effort, without remorse or recrimination, without anger or rancor. America is in need of unity and longing for a larger measure of compassion."

So all you angry liberals out there who for the first time felt invigorated and not disenfranchised, keep in mind that the best politics are local.

In Bush's acceptance speech, he agreed with Kerry that it's now time to mend the wounds we all have from the divisive election campaign.

"We have one country, one constitution, and one future that binds us," Bush said. "And when we come together and work together, there is no limit to the greatness of America."

We hope that Bush will hold true to his promise to earn the trust of the 48 percent that didn't vote for him. It's in his ability to do so and if he leads the way, perhaps the U.S. House and Senate will follow. In our humble opinion, Bush needs to govern more toward the social, especially considering the heated battles over social and moral issues like gay marriage and abortion. ◆

From the Opinions Editor Moving on, getting ready for four more years of Bush

Well, it's all over. Shout hooray at your own discretion.

Judging by the media and the conclusions I've reached talking to some of the professors around campus yesterday morning, as well as those up in the office on election night, the race is over and President George W. Bush has won a second term.

That said, I think all the votes in question should be counted. That is, a central tenant to the operation of a republic. However, many ballots are still in question, they should be counted even though Sen. John Kerry has officially conceded to the president.

I'm fairly irritated that Fox and NBC had both announced that Ohio had gone into Bush's column while every other network and news service in the world had declared the state was too close to call right up to the very last moment. I would have thought that after the infamous 2000 election, networks would be more wary of calling a state that was being so heavily contested by both sides.

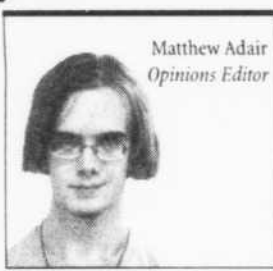
I'm tired. I'm frustrated, upset, annoyed and exhausted. I wanted Kerry to win so badly and I am furious that the Democrats managed to blow another election. I am sad to see that it'll be another four years before anyone will have a chance to set the country in a less arrogant direction, but I'm willing to accept what has played out.

The fact is, Bush won. I'm not going to throw accusations around that conspiracy is afoot because I have none to make. They just seem like too convenient an answer to the question of "what happened?" for me to take them seriously. I'm not going to threaten to leave the country. Firstly, where would I go? What would I do to survive? How would I pay off my debts or continue my education?

Secondly, I think it would be childish of me to throw my hands in the air and say, "I quit!" I dislike the president and I disagree with his party more often than not. But I feel that it is my responsibility as a citizen and as someone in the minority of the electoral outcome that I need to provide an opposing side to things. That's not just my right; it's my job. It's my duty.

So congratulations, Bush. I and many others like me look forward to jabbing you, your party and your talking heads with sharp needles from now until 2008. ◆

Matthew Adair is a sophomore art education major and can be reached at matt.adair@gmail.com.



Matthew Adair
Opinions Editor

The realization that George W. Bush will again be our nation's president brought tears to my eyes and many of those I shared election night with.

These weren't tears of mere defeat – the candidate we endorsed failing to take victory – but of sheer and utter fear at the thought of our homeland experiencing another four years under such leadership, if you refer to it as such.

I'm afraid of what will happen to women. Bush has already launched numerous assaults against women's reproductive freedoms.

Without the freedom of bodily choice, women once again fall further back into a second-class role within society.

Bush has also not worked to create equal pay among men and women, at least for those who were not among the hundreds of thousands that lost their jobs in the last four years.

I also wanted to see a candidate enter the White House that made work against domestic violence a priority, since this is a leading cause of death and injury for women in our country. That, too, was a vision unrealized.

I'm brought to tears by the thought of where our children will stand in the coming four years. The "No Child Left Behind" initiative has left millions of children behind and hasn't lived up to its great goals of bettering our school



Wit and Wonder

Callie Elizabeth Butler
Staff Columnist

systems. And unfortunately, our continuing president fails to see that.

I'm also concerned about those school children reaching adolescence with no understanding of sexuality outside of the "don't do it" rhetoric that is now pouring through our school systems.

Instead of educating children on contraception and safe sex choices, we are leading them blindly into a world where more than 60 percent of them will have sex before graduating from high school and many of which will become pregnant during those years. I wanted a president that endorsed education over ignorance.

I fear what these next four years will mean for our country in the eyes of the world. Already Bush has aided in creating a hate of the United States that has spread along the globe, and I worry that these

concerns also lie with the health of Americans. The majority of Americans consume meat on a regular basis, but under Bush's leadership, testing of meats, par-

icularly beef products, has been drastically cut in an effort to appease and benefit meat producers.

I'm worried about college students as our universities continue to receive lower and lower funding as tuition rates climb. Bush watched this occur over the last four years, and I fear that the hardship on students and their families will continue to grow.

And with so little funding coming into our schools, I also worry about the quality of our education, as universities are often not able to hire additional faculty and improve facilities necessary to our learning. We are the future, but I worry about that future as we strive to learn in a country where our leader isn't making us a priority.

His tax cuts may have sent us checks in the mail, but they merely served to plunge our country into significant debt, along with costs of the Iraq war, that we, as well as our children, will be forced to bear in the future as taxes will inevitably rise.

My concerns also lie with the health of Americans. The majority of Americans consume meat on a regular basis, but under Bush's leadership, testing of meats, par-

icularly beef products, has been drastically cut in an effort to appease and benefit meat producers.

He completely circumvented the urging and recommendations of numerous organizations that have concerns about the safety of American's meats.

Bush failed to listen, however, and as a result, we are a country at risk.

Millions of Americans also remain without health coverage, and Bush has done little in his four-year term to work on this growing problem, aside from his senior drug prescription plan, which still hasn't proven to be highly beneficial in working against a nationwide problem that is leaving millions of Americans, young and old, without adequate medical care.

Even in the face of defeat, it is incredibly important that we continue to raise our voices and demand recognition of the issues that affect us on a very basic level.

Many fail to realize the impact that a president has on our day-to-day lives, but the effect is great. The polls have closed, but that doesn't mean our mouths have to. Continue to raise your voice and make your opinions heard, even if they don't coincide with those of our president. ◆

Callie Elizabeth Butler is a senior mass communications major and can be reached at ceb2k@mtsu.edu.

'04 election indicative of state of the nation

Staff Editorial
Daily Utah Chronicle

SALT LAKE CITY – In the history of cultural consciousness, there are a handful of easily identifiable events that can be said to contribute to a sense of generational identity.

These events are the physical embodiment of the issues that rally and polarize a civilization, and in so doing, help to forge a sense of self for what is often a previously apathetic or unmotivated demographic of individuals.

The examples are many: The death of Princess Diana, the Vietnam/Nixon dilemmas and the liberal American patriotism that counteracted it, the tragedies of Sept. 11, 2001. All of these occurrences have revealed something about the people they affect by simply generating public response.

This is because these public actions and responses speak volumes about those responsible for them.

So, how does the 2004 election fit in with these identity-forging events? It is representative of a gamut of ideological, political, faith-based differences, and is extremely valuable in terms of helping modern America forge a more developed understanding of its identity.

That is, the 2004 election means more to Americans than simply which president we place in office – it is the distillation of national differences and similarities that have stewed since Bush took office four years ago and the 9/11 attacks that promptly followed his inauguration.

It is no secret that America is divided along very partisan lines right now, and as such, this election means a great deal to a

greatly varied demographic of citizens. Of course, everyone knows where they were when the Twin Towers fell, everyone knows how they felt when we invaded Iraq and now, in the wake of this most recent election, all of voting America will remember how they feel about the outcome of a decision that has come to represent the culmination of ideologies in our nation.

The question becomes, then, why is this election so important?

The reason why the 2004 election is so paramount is not simply because it has the American system of government – no question, it does.

But, the greater reason why this election took such an incomparable significance is that the voting public itself set it up to be so important.

The 2004 election was a self-fulfilling prophecy – up to this point, Americans cared about certain issues, but they lacked the figureheads and melting pot to gather all the ingredients together. Because the media, the public and the government stressed the importance of this election, and because it served as an embodiment of all that either irks or pleases Americans, the 2004 election could never have been anything other than paramount – we set it up to be that.

And that's just fine. Much like all the other identity-forging circumstances that came before it, the 2004 election is very much a byproduct of the population that created it.

This election is America – we made it, we feel passionately for it and we're the ones who dictated its outcome. ◆

Homosexuals: not just a stereotype

It seems that society is fighting a losing battle against homophobia.

But I am not referring to the current talk of amending the Constitution in order to ban gay marriage altogether. I am referring to the root of the problem: the harsh treatment and stereotyping of homosexuals.

Let's start with the common perception of homosexual males. Believe it or not, all gay men don't prance around in tight and talk about fashion. Nor do they go to get pedicures and massages. In fact, they look just like straight men. They eat and sleep just like normal people. This one is hard to believe, but they even like sports.

Women are given a flexible stereotype. They can be either a "butch" or a "hottie." But contrary to popular belief, lesbians do wear skirts and heels and don't always sport short, spiky hair. They aren't always extremely attractive either. They, too, look just like a heterosexual woman.

Most homosexuals don't wear signs that say, "Look, I'm gay!" In fact, it is hard to tell unless they tell you themselves or you see proof of that action.

Why does homophobia hit people as soon as they know someone is gay? Heterosexual males, in particular, are horrified at the thought of gay men. Being in the same room as a gay man makes them feel uncomfortable. Suddenly, they have an urge to grab a woman and get out. The excuse normally consists of a paranoid, "I don't want them to hit on me."

News flash: Gay men normally don't hit on straight guys. Perhaps your ego is a bit big if you think that all people, regardless of sexuality, want to hit on you.

Their "gaydar" seems to work pretty well. A simple look from a homosexual sends chills up straight guys' spines, but the regular slapping of the butt during any sporting event is perfectly acceptable?

Put a straight guy in the presence of two lesbians, and the puddle of drool never ceases to end. There is the element of two women instead of one, but then again there is that whole lesbian thing ... as in "not interested in men."

We must clear this myth up. Homosexuality is not contagious. It isn't like chicken pox or mono. Don't worry; you didn't need to get the vaccine before you entered college. You are okay. Living with gay men will not make you gay. I repeat: Gayness is not infectious.

Worse than the misconceptions of homosexuals themselves is the violence they are subject to. For some strange reason, people tend to react aggressively when they find out someone is gay. The hate crimes that result are astounding. Verbal abuse is also problematic.

The good news is that you don't have to agree with the lifestyle of homosexuals. You don't even have to like them. But you should practice tolerance and avoid stereotyping.

You won't always have your gay repellent on you. ◆

Gretchen Jenkins is a freshman political science major and can be reached at gmj2d@mtsu.edu.



(This Title for Rent)

Gretchen Jenkins
Staff Columnist

Cheer. Cry. Watch how the election played out online.

<http://sidelinesvote04.blogspot.com>

SIDELINES

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SPORTS

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Thursday, November 4, 2004

SIDELINES ♦ 5

Blue Raiders win first-round match over Arkansas State

By Colby Sledge
Sports Editor

Although the Middle Tennessee soccer team was the No. 1 seed coming into the Sun Belt Conference Championships this week, nobody seemed to notice.

Reigning champion Denver and perennial contender North Texas garnered most of the attention, and even host school Florida International received more mention in the conference's tournament preview.

So the Blue Raiders went about their usual business: winning.

The Blue Raiders took their first step toward an NCAA Tournament berth with a 5-2 win over

Arkansas State yesterday at FIU's University Park in Miami.

"Our philosophy all year long has been 90 minutes at a time," Middle Tennessee coach Aston Rhoden told MT Media Relations. "We're just glad to get through this one. ASU has a good team, and to get through this one feels good. Now it's on to the next one."



Brereton

SBC Player of the Year Debs Brereton and SBC Newcomer of the Year Lisa-Marie Woods scored two goals each as the Blue Raiders (13-4-1) improved to 6-0 all-time against the Indians.

"They certainly justified their awards," Rhoden said. "It was a nice way to start the tournament and they helped to get us going, but it was a total team win and one we had to work hard to earn."

Yesterday's match remained scoreless until the 23rd minute, when Woods put a penalty kick past ASU keeper Brielan Smiechowski. Three minutes later Brereton scored her 17th goal of the season to put MT up 2-0.

"It's nice to get this first win because the first one is always toughest," Woods told MT Media Relations. "We played well and Arkansas State was



Woods

a tough opponent, just like we knew they would be. Now we have to get rested and focused for the semifinals."

Brereton scored her second goal in the 63rd minute to push the lead to 3-0. Woods added her second score just four minutes later to give the Blue Raiders a commanding 4-0 lead.

Rhoden emptied his bench after Woods' second score, but Holmes added to the Blue Raiders still with an unassisted goal in the 79th minute after ASU had pulled to 4-1. A late Indians goal accounted for the final score.

The Blue Raiders will face host FIU in the semifinals after the No. 5 seed Golden Panthers defeated No. 4 seed Western Kentucky 5-3. That game will be tomorrow at 4 p.m. ♦

MT only conference school below average

By Mark Emery and Colby Sledge
Staff Writer and Sports Editor

In the Oct. 28 issue of *Sidelines*, the article "Officials Remain Optimistic on Attendance" discussed the new NCAA requirement of Division I-A schools to average 15,000 per home game. We explored what Middle Tennessee has been doing to meet this goal, and we also asked MT athletic department officials why they thought MT is on pace to fall short of that average this year.

This week we take a look at some of the other schools in the Sun Belt Conference and what they have done to increase attendance at their home contests.

North Texas

North Texas has won the SBC title three years in a row and has won 22 straight conference games. Since the conference's opening year in 2001, the rivalry between MT and North Texas has grown on the field, but the two teams remain far apart in attendance numbers.

In 2003, the Mean Green averaged 18,694 per home game, while the Blue Raiders averaged 11,021. One of UNT's home games was against Big 12 conference member Baylor, which is just 114 miles from UNT.

"There is no one quick fix," said Paul Batchelder, who has been the associate athletic director for a year-and-a-half at North Texas. "Playing a team like Baylor does several different things for our program: It gives us an anchor game and it is also a regional rivalry, which is important. It is a game that people want to see and also is a com-



Photo courtesy of ULM Media Relations

These Louisiana-Monroe fans have helped boost the Indians' average home football attendance by more than 5,000 fans this season.

mon place to help out with season ticket sales."

This year, the Mean Green are averaging 15,334 fans with one home game remaining. UNT played the University of Texas at a neutral site this year, but Batchelder said the only way it could be a

home game was if it was in the contract.

Batchelder added that UNT does not rely on sales of season tickets for the majority of its fan base, but instead counts more on families and group sales.

"I don't know if we'd do as anything as adventurous as MTSU, like concerts," Batchelder said. "We do more grassroots promotions, and not really much with the media. By grassroots, I mean we do more with the community like families, youth groups and church organizations to get them to come to the games."

Batchelder also said the university largely depends on the students. He estimated that UNT can have anywhere from 4,500-5,000 students per game to as few as 2,500.

Regarding North Texas' practice of selling tickets online, Batchelder thinks that the Internet provides a viable out-

let for ticket sales, but he does not think it makes a difference on whether or not people will decide to attend the games.

With one game remaining on its home schedule, Batchelder still feels very optimistic that North Texas will maintain its 15,000 average.

University of Louisiana-Lafayette

The UL-Lafayette has posted losing records the past three years. Last year the 4-8 Ragin' Cajuns attracted 13,995 fans per home game, which was down from their 15,055 average in 2002 despite a 3-9 record.

Both of those numbers were better than the 2001 average of 13,323 fans, when ULL went 3-8.

In his third year as the ULL Assistant Director of Athletic Marketing and Promotions, Eric Maron feels that

striving for the 15,000 average is very important.

"We have been more aggressive with our marketing and promotions," Maron said. "We have established partnerships with the media. We worked trades with the newspapers, in which we gave them advertising space in the facilities in exchange for advertising space in the paper."

Whatever they've done, it's worked. UL-Lafayette has played three home games this year and has attracted more than 20,000 fans at every game. The Ragin' Cajuns are averaging 23,440 per game, including the season-opener against Northwestern State that drew 22,117 people.

"We stopped chasing the money,"

See Schools, 8

2004 Attendance Averages of Sun Belt Schools

Rank	School	No. of Games	Average Attendance
1.	Louisiana-Lafayette	3	23,440
2.	Arkansas State	2	23,281
3.	Troy	3	22,251
4.	Utah State	3	20,921
5.	Idaho	3	19,684
6.	New Mexico State	4	18,255
7.	Louisiana-Monroe	2	16,652
8.	North Texas	4	15,334
9.	Middle Tennessee	4	13,081

Pierce presents challenge for MT defense

By Jill Davis
Staff Writer

The Blue Raider football team shut out can Aggie team last week, but one Aggie team just as efficiently against another Aggie team?

After a 21-0 shutout at home against Utah that the Blue Raiders will travel to Las Cruces, N.M., on Saturday to face New Mexico State (3-5, 3-1 SBC) for a chance to extend their conference winning streak to four games.

All three of Middle Tennessee's conference wins, however, have come at home.

"Playing at home is always a plus," MT head coach Andy McCollum said at his weekly press conference on Monday. "But to be where you want to be as a team, you have to win on the road. In this conference it is tough to win on the road. New Mexico State is a tough place to play, always has been. They do a great job and we have a tough challenge ahead of us."

The contest this Saturday will revolve around both good

defense and consistent offense. NMSU's senior quarterback Buck Pierce matches up against Blue Raider sophomore quarterback Clint Marks, who have both proven effective this season.

Marks owns a commanding advantage over Pierce in passing yards, however, with 2,253 to Pierce's 1,413. Marks likely has fond memories of the Aggies, as he made his first career start against NMSU last year and gave MT its first victory in the 2003 season with a 35-18 win.

Avoiding mistakes will play a big role in Saturday's matchup. In last year's game the Blue Raiders collected three interceptions and converted three of six red zone scoring opportunities in 35-18 MT win.

Making plays on third downs and executing long drives have also been a big part of MT's offensive scheme this season. A startling 90 percent of MT's scoring drives have been longer than 70 yards this season.

"At times we have hurt ourselves, but we've been doing a better job lately," Marks said. "It's important to move the

chains and sustain long drives, because it wears down a defense and keeps the other offense off the field."

Middle Tennessee (4-4 overall, 3-2) holds a 48 percent success rate on third down conversions, while NMSU has a 35 percent rate.

NMSU is battling MT for second place in the SBC after a slow start to the first half of the season. Last week the Aggies stomped Florida International in a 56-31 win as Pierce threw for 367 yards with three touchdowns and the NMSU offense racked up 646 total yards.

The Blue Raider defense will look to do a considerably better job than the Golden Panthers, and McCollum believed leadership was the key to the squad's recent success.

"I have been proud of our leadership by most of our guys," McCollum said. "We have guys that are leading by example on the field on defense. Thomas Johnson, Jerry Vanderpool and Alvin Fite are three seniors who have played a lot of games here." But McCollum also admitted

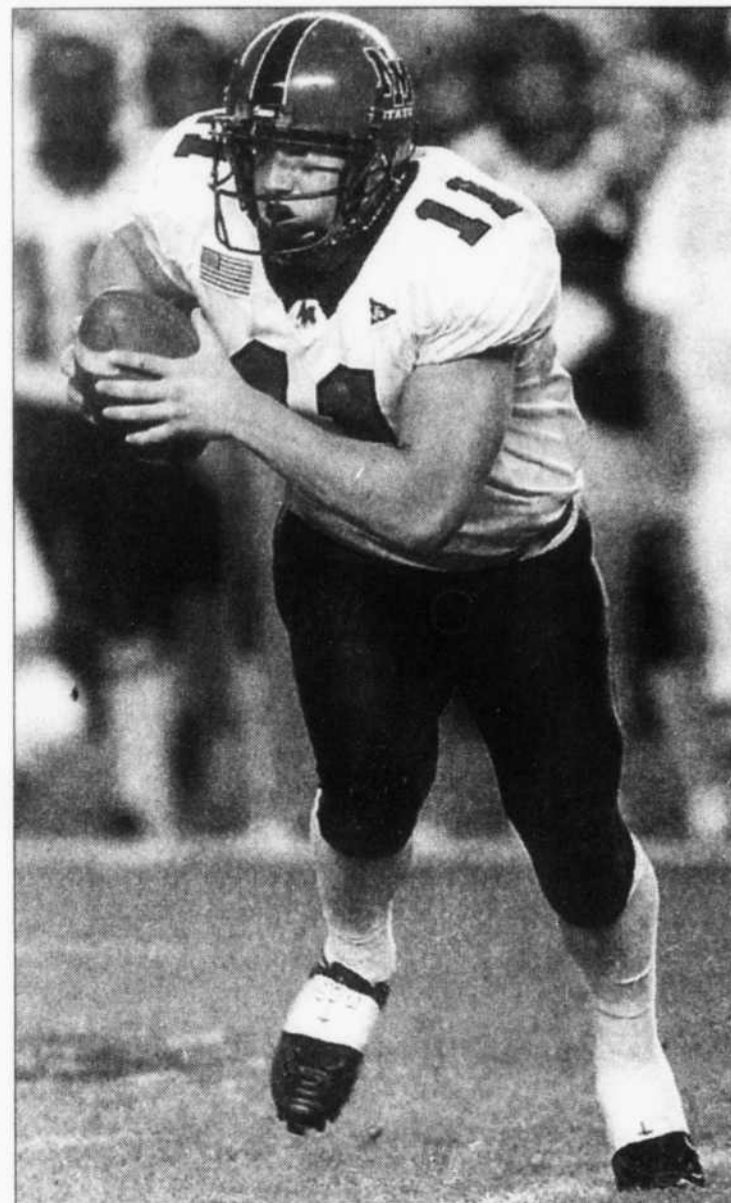
his defense will face a challenge from Pierce. The Aggies are averaging 39 points and 494 yards of offense per game in their last three contests. Over those three games, Pierce has completed 70 percent of his passes for 878 yards, six touchdowns and only two interceptions.

"Buck Pierce is someone I have a lot of respect for," McCollum said. "He has done a great job. We know what kind of ability he has. He has it all. He's got the arm, he can run, he is tough, and we have a lot of respect for him."

Although Pierce certainly commands attention, third-string quarterback Joey Vincent has been the Aggies' secret weapon of late. Vincent has completed each of his last three pass attempts for 74 yards and a

See Aggies, 8

Photo courtesy of NMSU Media Relations
New Mexico State senior quarterback Buck Pierce has completed 70 percent of his passes for 878 yards in his last three games.



MT at New Mexico State GameDay Preview



By Jon Leffew
Assistant Sports Editor

When MT runs

The fact that the Blue Raiders rank 104th nationally in rushing is misleading.

With the success of Clint Marks and the MT passing game, Eugene Gross and company have had few opportunities to run the ball this season.

Gross, Terry Jackson and Lee Baker have shown promise, scoring 13 touchdowns combined on the ground and averaging 100 yards per game, just enough to keep defenses guessing.

The Aggie rushing defense, on the other hand, ranks 117th nationally, and if throwing the ball doesn't work on Saturday, running it likely will.

Advantage: MT

When MT passes

Marks ranks seventh nationally in total offense, second in completion percentage, and leads the Sun Belt in nearly every passing category.

Kerry Wright is second nationally in receptions per game, and has accounted for nine of the Blue Raiders' 11 plays that have gone for more than 40 yards this year.

Meanwhile, the Aggies are allowing just 213 yards per game through the air, an average that will likely go up after this week.

Advantage: MT

When NMSU runs

The Aggies also have very misleading rushing stats. Though the team ranks 91st nationally in rushing, they have amassed an average of 177 yards per game for their last three games, including a total of six touchdowns.

Muammar Ali has led the team in rushing for those last three games, averaging 88.3 yards per game on 5.2 yards per carry.

The Blue Raider rushing defense allows just less than 120 yards per game and has performed well all season, so this decision could go either way.

Advantage: Even

When NMSU passes

Though Marks will get a lot of attention in this game, Aggie quarterback Buck Pierce has had a record-setting season of his own.

Pierce moved past 4,000 total passing yards in last week's game and has keyed an offensive explosion for the Aggies in recent weeks.

With the emergence of Andrew Mooney, Brandon Allen and Paul Dombrowski as legitimate receiving

threats, the anemic MT pass defense likely doesn't stand a chance on Saturday.

Advantage: NMSU

Special Teams

Colby Smith has hit eight of his last nine field goal attempts for the Blue Raiders and continues to improve in his duties as punter (38.2 yards per punt).

Every other aspect of the Blue Raider special teams unit is average, but Kerry Wright has the ability to return a punt for a touchdown any time he touches the ball.

Meanwhile, Kenneth Buckley has enjoyed success returning kickoffs the last three games, averaging 32 yards per return. Ryan Guardia has proven to be an adequate kicker for the Aggies, hitting seven of 12 attempts on the year.

Advantage: Even

Coaching

Though MT head coach Andy McCollum and NMSU head coach Tony Samuel both have losing records, the Blue Raiders are riding a two-game win streak and the Aggies have lost only once at home.

The Blue Raiders have a chance to climb above .500 late in the year after finishing the last two years at 4-8, while the Aggies are currently 3-5 overall.

Both coaches need to win this, as second place in the conference is on the line.

Here's another one that is simply too close to call, but Samuel gets the nod since the Aggies are at home.

Advantage: NMSU

Intangibles

The Aggies have an obvious advantage playing at home, as the home team has always won in the series between the two teams.

NMSU has defeated both Troy and Louisiana-Lafayette at home this year, and any lapses by the Blue Raiders will likely result in the same this Saturday.

It will be senior day for the Aggies, and the team will be looking to send their 18 seniors out with a victory.

Advantage: NMSU

Conclusion

Though the Blue Raiders are on a three-game conference winning streak and appear to be better than the Aggies on paper, this will likely be a very close game.

NMSU is always successful at home, as seen by their upset victories over other SBC foes this year.

Marks, Wright and the MT offense will keep this game close throughout, but if the Aggies play anything like they have the last three games, then the home team gets the nod. ♦



(3-5)

(4-4)

Pos.	No.	Name
Offense		
QB	13	Clint Marks
RB	20	Eugene Gross
FB	31	Nick McAfee
WR (X)	1	Kerry Wright
WR (Y)	15	Cleanord Saintil
WR (Z)	11	Pedro Holiday
WR (H)	3	Chris Henry
TE	85	Stephen Chicola
LT	60	Willie Hall
LG	58	Quinton Staton
C	57	Marcus Gates
RG	71	Joe Evilsizer
RT	73	Germayle Franklin
Defense		
LE	43	Erik Walden
NG	97	Jerry Vanderpool
T	93	Thomas Johnson
RE	45	Sean Mosley
SLB	40	Dennis Burke
MLB	23	Alvin Fite
WLB	41	Marcell Horne
LC	24	Bradley Robinson
LS	30	Jeremiah Weaver
RS	8	Jonathan Harris
RC	5	Damon Nickson
Special Teams		
PK/P	46	Colby Smith
KO	49	Paul Wheeler
H	47	Walt Bell
DS	36	John Crawford
PR	1	Kerry Wright
KR	6	Lee Baker
Head Coach		Andy McCollum
Athletic Director		Boots Donnelly

Pos.	No.	Name
Offense		
QB	11	Buck Pierce
RB	20	Muammar Ali
FB	47	David Romaka
SE	7	Brandon Allen
WR	84	Tim Tolbert
TE	90	Jeremy Weeks
LT	69	Mike Martinez
LG	77	Justin Shopbell
C	70	Matt Vincent
RG	63	Steve Subia
RT	64	Nick Cole
Defense		
LDE	82	Greg Scaffidi
NT	91	Jared Naylor
DT	96	Chase Spicer
RDE	46	Aubrey Dorisme
SLB	30	Simon Ocampo
MLB	42	Jimmy Cottrell
WLB	37	Richard Glover
LC	31	Shukree Shabazz
FS	2	Matt Griebel
SS	3	Dominique Jacobs
RC	25	Gill Byrd
Special Teams		
PK	43	Ryan Guardia
P	16	Steven Smith
H	4	Joey Vincent
DS	60	T.J. O'Leary
PR	29	Steven Harper
KR	12	Kenneth Buckley
Head Coach		Tony Samuel
Athletic Director		Brian Faison



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Photo courtesy English.com

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Blue Raiders head to Arkansas

By Clarence Plank
Staff Writer

The Middle Tennessee volleyball team is hitching up the wagons and heading to Arkansas with hopes of a higher seed in the Sun Belt Conference tournament.

With four Sun Belt games to go before the end of the season, MT (14-11, 7-3 SBC) has clinched a playoff berth in the conference tournament with a 3-0 win over FIU last Friday.

The Blue Raiders will next play Arkansas-Little Rock (12-10, 6-5 SBC) at 7 p.m. on Friday. MT shut out UALR 3-0 on Oct. 2.

"We have made the conference tournament with our win over FIU on Friday, so I don't think there's any pressure right now," MT head coach Matt Peck said. "Let's take care of some of these matches and get some wins on the road, because the more matches we win, the higher the seed we get."

The Blue Raiders hope UALR will focus all their attention on KeKe Deckard and Dara McLean, MT's leading hitters, during the course of the game and overlook freshmen hitters Lindsay Sisco and Quanshell Scott.

"We are going to try to interrupt their game plan," Peck said. "I don't want them to predict what we are going to do."

It will likely be hard for the Blue Raiders to predict what the Trojans will do as well, as UALR has three players with more than 200 kills. Sophomore Ana Carolina Buccini leads the team with 271

kills and 236 digs. Senior Ivana Vracar has 266 kills, and freshman Ivana Davidova has 213 kills.

Middle Tennessee is coming off a 3-1 (30-21, 30-25, 18-30, 32-30) win over the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga on Tuesday. KeKe Deckard led the Blue Raiders with 23 kills and Dara McLean added 20 kills.

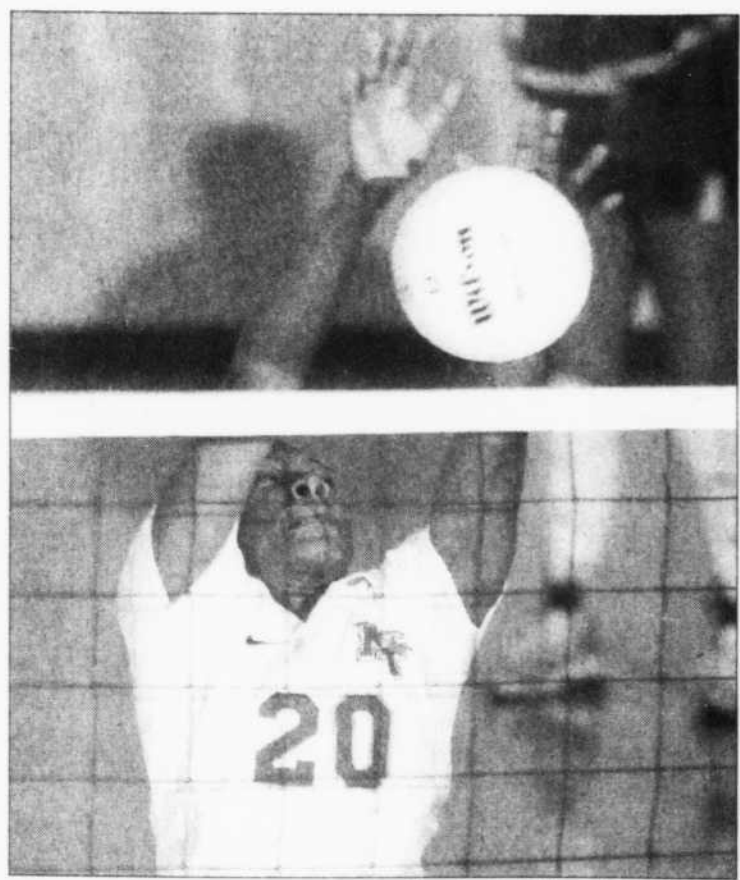
UALR has won five of their last six matches, including a 3-1 win over Denver on Friday. The only team the Trojans have lost to in their current run is Arkansas State (21-7, 8-3 SBC), whom the Blue Raiders will face Sunday at 1 p.m.

ASU will be trying to separate itself from MT and gain some ground on Western Kentucky, with whom the Lady Indians are tied for first place in the East Division. MT won their last meeting 3-2 on Oct. 1 at Alumni Memorial Gym, snapping the Lady Indians' seven-game winning streak.

The Lady Indians had a nine-game winning streak broken on Friday in a 3-1 loss to West Division leader New Mexico State. ASU sophomore Beth Jones had nine kills in the loss.

Giedre Tarnauskaite leads the Lady Indians with 391 kills and 24 service aces. Caitlyn Mitchell is second with 296 kills.

Both games will take place in Arkansas as the Blue Raiders play four of their last five matches on the road. The Blue Raiders will likely be helped on their road trip by the return of Tara Mikuzis, who has been out since late September with a high ankle sprain. ♦



KeKe Deckard leads the Blue Raiders in kills this season. Photo by Micah Miller | Staff Photographer

Schools: Louisiana-Monroe gives away semester's tuition at home contests

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Maron said. "We have started going after the wins. Before we would play big-name schools and start the season 0-4 and get into SBC play with our team being beat up. Now we focus on promoting each game and being able to start Sun Belt play with a better record."

Maron echoed MT Assistant Athletic Director Mark Meadows in saying that a lot of the students at ULL did not realize they could get into the football games for free. Officials have increased student awareness by posting flyers around campus, and Maron thinks this has increased student turnout and enthusiasm.

Of course, money also helps. The university holds various student-sponsored contests at the games, including a Punt, Pass and Kick Contest for \$10,000.

UL-Lafayette has two home games remaining against North Texas and Troy. The North Texas game will be on this Friday night and will be aired on ESPN2.

Louisiana-Monroe

After averaging just 11,298 fans per home game last year, the athletic staff at Louisiana-Monroe knew exactly what they needed to do to boost attendance.

Give away money, and lots of it.

Every home game features a 'Student Sweepstakes' contest, in which one student wins a personal parking pass, another wins either a book scholarship, a meal plan or a housing scholarship for a semester and a third student wins a semester's worth of tuition.

That's right: a free semester of college.

But officials with UL-Monroe feel that more than just money is driving the school's attendance average, which currently stands at 16,652 after two home games.

"Really, I think the excitement of our overall university is what has brought people back on campus," said ULM Marketing Coordinator Coby Wells. "With our new dorms and the changes and our new coaching staff and the players doing well, those have been our main things."

UL-Monroe has spent \$50 million on new and renovated dorms, which have persuaded more students to live on campus and have helped encourage student participation.

"When it's all said and done, all of our dorms except for two will be new," Wells said.

A change in athletic directors has also infused life into the athletic program. Bobby Staub is in his first year as athletic director at UL-Monroe after 20 years in

the University of Alabama at Birmingham athletic department.

And of course, it also helps to win. After a nine-game losing streak that extended into this season, the Indians have won three of their last four games.

"This is the first time they've won three consecutive games in a long time, so that has helped," Wells said. "We have an exciting staff and the head coach [second-year head coach Charlie Weatherbie] is really involved with the student body and the community as well."

UL-Monroe does not sell single-game tickets online, but instead relies on heavy marketing to attract fans.

"We've been going on morning shows and radio shows with commercials and spots, so we're partnering with different media outlets to really push our name," Wells said.

Other Schools in the Conference

Arkansas State and Troy could not be reached to see what their programs have done to increase attendance, but all numbers indicate that they will average the 15,000 needed.

ASU has two more home games remaining. The Indians' first two games were against Memphis and Troy, and

ASU is currently averaging 23,281.

In 2003, ASU had a record of 5-7 and averaged 17,487 in their five home games. In 2002, ASU finished the season with a 6-7 record and averaged 13,955 in seven home games.

Troy has enjoyed a successful first year in the SBC, as the Trojans are averaging 22,251 after three home games against Missouri, Utah State and Idaho.

Over the past three years, Troy has averaged over 15,000 fans twice. Last year Troy had a 6-6 record and averaged 21,091 over four home games.

In 2002, Troy had an average of 13,403 fans per game and a 4-8 record. Back in 2001, the team had a 7-5 record and averaged 16,966 per game.

Utah State, New Mexico State and Idaho were not included in this report because they will be leaving the SBC for the Western Athletic Conference next year. All three schools, however, are easily on pace to average at least 15,000 fans this season (see box on page 5).

Next week *Sidelines* will examine how local schools with Division I-AA football teams draw fans and remain competitive in other Division I-A sports. Both this story and last week's story in this series are available online at www.mtsusidelines.com. ♦

Aggies: Bad run defense

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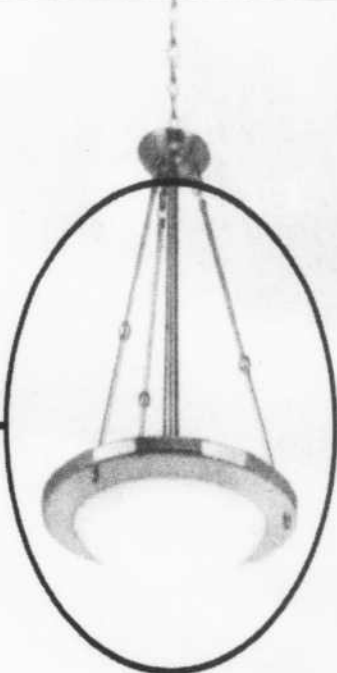
touchdown, with two of those coming on trick plays.

Rounding out the offense, NMSU wide receiver Tim Tolbert leads the Aggies with 297 yards and three touchdowns. Additionally, the Aggie running game has improved and is now averaging 177 yards per game. In the first five games of the season, the running game was averaging just 75 yards per game.

On defense, the Aggies are ranked first in the SBC in stopping teams in the red zone, thanks in part to their toughness on fourth down. The Aggies are weak against the run, however, and are giving up 256.8 yards per game on the ground.


NMSU will be sending out 18 seniors onto the field for the final time, which should give the Aggies plenty of motivation to avenge last year's loss to the Blue Raiders.

Saturday's game kicks off at 2:05 CDT at Aggie Memorial Stadium. ♦




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