

# Blue Raiders, Lady Raiders Both Three-Peat

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## **MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -**

The Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders and Lady Raiders each won their third consecutive Sun Belt Conference Indoor Track and Field Championship on Sunday at the Convocation Center in Jonesboro, Ark, with the men winning handily and the women pulling out the victory in the final event of the meet.

The Blue Raiders romped through the competition, winning by 57 points over second-place Arkansas State, as junior Mardy Scales picked up Outstanding Track Performer and head coach Dean Hayes won his 22<sup>nd</sup> Coach of the Year honor.

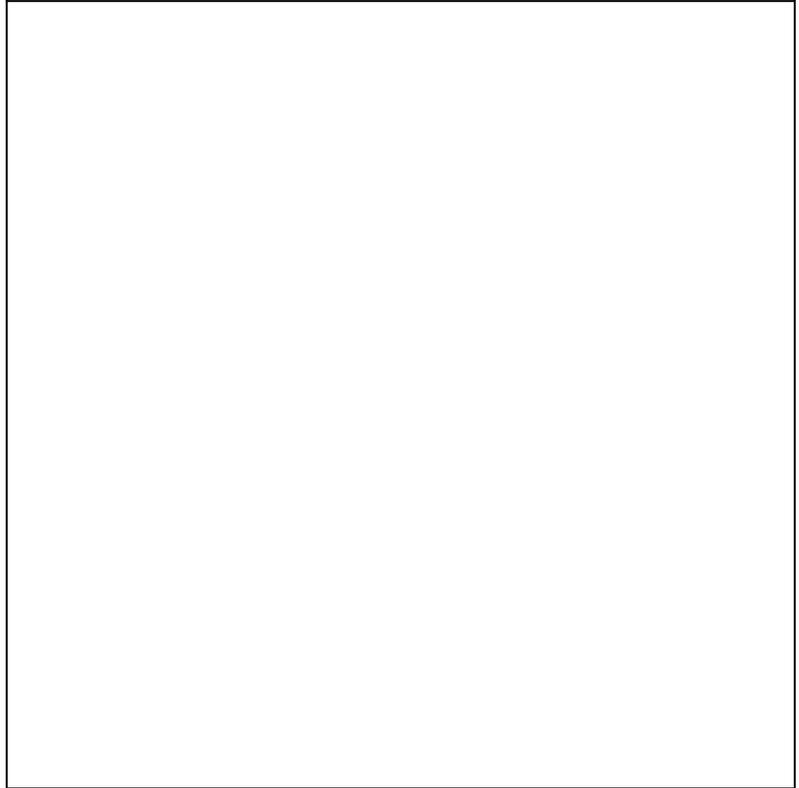
Scales on both the 55 and 200m races on Sunday, staying undefeated this season in the 55 or 60m distances. The Franklin, Tenn., native has automatically qualified for the NCAA Championships in the 60m and will be looking for his second straight All-America honor in the 60m.

The Blue Raiders racked up points on Sunday in the sprints, as Scales, DJ Spann and Wesley Dupar-Scott finished 1-2-3 in the 55m. The trio also were the top three finishers in the 200m, going Scales, Dupar-Scott and Spann, respectively, with Brad Orr taking fifth and Omar Ali placing seventh to give the squad 30 of a possible 39 points in the event.

Sean Waller won the 400m, with Tim Hicks taking third, Fred Williams fourth and Victor Okorie seventh. Linnie Yarbrough came in second in the 55m hurdles, with Orr taking fifth and Jasper Demps sixth. The men picked up 92 of a possible 156 points in the four sprint event finals on Sunday.

Kareem Bland finished fifth in the triple jump with a mark of 45-8, while Levi Sybert was fourth (4:23.82) and Anthony McGary took seventh (4:27.28) in the mile. Geoffrey Lagat came in second (15:19.23) in the 5000m, and the foursome of Williams, Spann, Hicks and Waller won the 4x400m relay in 3:16.42.

For the Lady Raiders, Okafor won both the 55 and 200m, as well, provisionally qualifying for the NCAA Championships in both events. Okafor ran 6.94 in the 55m finals and 23.85 in the 200m finals, picking up the Outstanding Track Performer Award in the process.



Freshman Kerry Barrow took fourth in the 55m, while Kishara George was third, Nicolette Jarrett fifth and Lanora Gray came in eighth in the 400m. LaToya Brown placed fourth in the 55m hurdles, with Candice Robertson coming in sixth and Jerkita McClorin seventh.

Kim Freeman won the triple jump on Sunday after taking the long jump on Saturday. The senior from Mobile, Ala., will end her career as the three-time defending champion in the triple jump after posting a mark of 39-5 in Sunday's event.

Junior Letitia Eady finished third in the triple jump, with Rolanda Howard taking eighth. Freshman Meaghan Byrd placed sixth in the weight throw on Sunday with a mark of 43-8.25.

But the women's championship race came down to the final event of the meet, with the Lady Raiders battling North Texas and Florida International for the title. The foursome of Jarrett, Gray, George and Okafor tied the Sun Belt Conference record in winning the 4x400m relay in 3:43.94. The Lady Raiders finished with 108 points, compared to 99 for North Texas and 98 for FIU.

"Mardy and Rosemary were just outstanding for us," Hayes said. "The men ran really well and the women came through in the end when they had to.

"Mardy continues to excel in the sprints and Wesley and DJ also were very good. Rosemary was just outstanding in qualifying for the NCAA's in both events."

The track squads have now won eight of a possible 12 indoor and outdoor titles since joining the Sun Belt Conference, and Hayes had picked up seven Coach of the Year honors.

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