Thomas, Walker, Tamgho All Win Twice

Raiders claim 10 firsts at last meet before conference championships

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Seniors James Thomas and Juan Walker and junior Stephanie Tamgho all won two events and Middle Tennessee claimed 10 first-place finishes overall Saturday at the MT Valentine Invitational at Murphy Center. Thomas set a personal-best in the shot put with a winning mark of 53-7 and has set PR's in the event in the last three meets. The Knoxville, Tenn., native was also first in the weight throw with a mark of 55-8. Walker posted first-place finishes in the long jump (season-best mark of 25-1) and 55-meter hurdles (7.42), his second victory this season in the long jump and fourth in the hurdles. Tamgho also posted season-bests in both the long jump (19-11) and triple jump (40-8.75), winning both events. The Blue Raiders also had winning marks from sophomore TraMayne Gillyard in the 400-meters (57.19), junior Antranette Stringer in the 200-meters (25.36) and sophomore Iceca Epps in the 55-meter hurdles (8.19) for the women and senior Pierre Ingram in the high jump (6-0) for the men. Elsewhere for the women, freshman MeLyn Thompson placed sixth in the weight throw (44-5), while freshman Brittany Cox finished second (45-0.5) and Thompson was third (45-0) in the shot put. In the triple jump, freshman Sarah Nambawa placed second with a season-best mark of 39-10 and junior Sierra Douglas was fourth with a mark of 38-0. In the running events, junior Marjorie Gombert finished eighth in the mile run in 5:18.43, while Stringer was second in the 400-meters in 58.50. Douglas placed second in the 55-meter hurdles in 8.36, and sophomore Erika Palmer placed second in the 55-meter dash in 7.28. Nambawa and senior Veronia Patterson finished second and third, respectively, in the 800-meters in 2:19.44 and 2:19.90, and Gillyard and Palmer were 2-3 in the 200-meters with times of 25.42 and 25.66, respectively. In the 3000-meters, freshman Sangau Zamzam placed second in 10:26.92, with senior Sara Lunning sixth in 11:05.25

and sophomore Tiffany Sawyer seventh in 11:05.74. For the Blue Raider men, senior Germayle Franklin placed fifth in the weight throw (44-9) and senior Christopher Sapp was eighth (34-6). Franklin also was eighth in the shot put with a mark of 38-2.5. Senior JaKeith Hairston finished second in the long jump with a mark of 23-3, while Walker was second and the top collegian in the triple jump (48-8), with Hairston seventh (44-3.5) and sophomore Brandon Jones eighth (43-7). In the running events, senior Tony Carufe placed eighth in the mile run in 4:30.12, while senior Jermaine Barton finished second in the 400-meters in 48.30 and sophomore Samuel Adade was fifth in 48.97. Barton and Adade placed second and third, respectively, in the 200-meters with times of 21.61 and 22.06. Freshman Freddie Rankin placed fifth in the 55-meter hurdles in 8.12, with freshman Duronal Monal third in the 55-meter dash in 6.50, followed by freshman Phillip Tanner in fourth (6.54) and sophomore Damon Nickson in fifth (6.66). Carufe was seventh and junior Chris Travis eighth in the 800-meters with times of 2:03.76 and 2:05.09, respectively. "We had some pretty good performances," head coach Dean Hayes said. "James' shot put was a big PR and Zamzam's 3000 was very good. The best part is all of our 3000 runners were under 12 minutes, including Kaitlyn Hammond in her first race of the season. "We had a lot of people with some nicks and bruises, so we didn't run them. But we did well and will spend the next two weeks getting ready for the Sun Belt meet." Middle Tennessee takes next weekend off before participating in the Sun Belt Indoor Championships, February 24-25, at the Convocation Center in Jonesboro, Ark. The Blue Raider men are the defending champions and have won five of six titles since joining the league, while the Middle Tennessee women claimed SBC championships four straight years from 2001-04.

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