1,600 relay team sets school record at Mideast Regionals

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BATON ROUGE, La. - The Middle Tennessee 1,600-relay team shattered the school record to qualify for the NCAA national meet in two weeks at Austin, Texas, with a 3:05.29 mark at the Mideast regionals at LSU Saturday night. The school-record time capped an outstanding Mideast regional for the track team as five performers punched their ticket into the NCAA national meet, while two other individuals are hopeful of reaching the national stage. The 1,600-meter relay team consisted of Xavier Darden, Wesley Dupar-Scott, Mardy Scales and Sean Waller. Additionally, Scales qualified individually in the 100- and 200-meter dashes while junior standout Rosemary Okafor assured herself a spot in the national field in the 400 meters. "I'm very pleased with the performances of several of our athletes," Middle Tennessee coach Dean Hayes said."We turned in some school-record marks and had some of our best times of the year. I'm especially pleased with the 4x400-relay team because we've always tried to get in the 3:05 range." The 3:05.29 time broke the previous school of 3:06.40 set this season at the Alabama Relays. In one of the most exciting events of the day, defending 100-meter champion Scales turned in a lifetime best 10.01, but it was only good enough for a second-place finish as he and Arkansas' Tyson Gay had a photo finish of identical times. Scales also qualified in the 200, finishing fourth with a mark 20.62. Okafor qualified in the 400-meter run with 52.29, good for fifth. Lady Raider Kishara George finished seventh in the 400-meter hurdles, setting a school record in the process, besting her previous mark of 58.98. Linnie Yarbrough finished eighth in the men's 110 hurdles with a time of 14.00. The women's 1,600-meter relay team of Kerry Barrow, Tiffany Owens, George and Okafor was eighth with a time of 3:39.75. The NCAA national championships will take place at the University of Texas June 9-13.

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