

Blue Raiders to play at Tennessee Thursday

Middle Tennessee faces the nationally-ranked Lady Vols inside Thompson-Boiling Arena

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Middle Tennessee will be looking to snap a two-game women's basketball losing skid with a 6 p.m. (CST) Thursday contest at No. 7 Tennessee in Knoxville, Tenn.

The Blue Raiders enter the game with a 5-3 record, but are just 1-2 away from the Murphy Center this season. MT dropped a 68-59 decision at Western Carolina Sunday in its last game.

Junior Alysha Clark continues to lead the team with 22.0 points per game and 8.4 rebounds per game. Her 22.0 ppg pace the Sun Belt statistics, while also rank ninth nationally.

Sophomore Anne Marie Lanning led the Lady Raiders with 16 points and classmate Emily Queen added her first double-double of the campaign with 15 points and a season-best 13 rebounds in the game at Western Carolina.



The Lady Vols will enter the tilt at 6-1 and have won five straight, including a 71-59 triumph Dec. 2 at George Washington. Freshman Glory Johnson paces Pat Summitt's squad with 16.4 ppg, while Vicki Baugh is hauling in a team-high 10.0 rpg.

Tennessee is averaging 50.1 rebounds per game with Johnson grabbing a team-high 60 (8.6 rpg).

"I have enjoyed playing Pat and the Lady Vols," Middle Tennessee head coach Rick Insell said. "We have had two games with them since I've been here and both times, we competed. She was happy we competed. She's out there trying to improve her team, much like what we are trying to do here. We have been a formidable opponent for them.

"I feel really good about going into this game. We may not have shot the ball extremely well the last two games, but I am still excited about our team. I think we have some great plusses as far as upside on this team. We just need to go in and take care of business, play our game and I think we will be in the game. We can't go in there turning the ball over like we have done the last couple of games. We stress like that much like Pat stresses that with her team.

"If we shoot the ball, execute our offense and run our defensive strategies, then we will be in great shape and it should be a good game."

The two teams have met nine times in the series, which began in 1976, with Tennessee winning all nine previous matchups. The two teams took a 22-year hiatus from 1984 to 2006, resuming play every year since then.

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