Blue Raiders return home with top scorer and national poll recognition

Clark is second nationally in scoring, Blue Raiders tied for 32nd in coaches poll

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Junior Alysha Clark, the Sun Belt Conference's leading scorer and second among all players nationally, will help to lead the Middle Tennessee women's basketball team in its first 2009 home game of the season at 7 p.m. Wednesday against Florida Atlantic inside the Murphy Center.

Clark currently boasts a 24.1 points per game average, ranking her second only to James Madison's Dawn Evans on the national leaderboard. The Mt. Juliet, Tenn., and Naismith Trophy candidate raises her average to 27.0 ppg in Sun Belt games only, placing her second in the conference.

She is the third Blue Raider in the last four seasons to rank continually among the national scoring leaders. Amber Holt ended last season as the nation's leading scorer with a 27.4 ppg clip. Chrissy Givens tallied a 22.6 ppg mark in 2006-07 to end the campaign ranked fourth in the country a year after 21.5 ppg for eighth nationally.

Middle Tennessee has won six straight to improve its record to 11-4 overall (3-0 Sun Belt) and move back into the national spotlight by receiving votes in both polls this week. The Lady Raiders collected four votes in the ESPN/*USA Today* Coaches' Poll to tie for 32nd with Gonzaga. MT also received one vote in the Associated Press Poll to tie for 35th.

As of Tuesday morning, the Blue Raiders also were No. 17 in the collegerpi.com RPI listings with the 19th-best strength of schedule.

Florida Atlantic enters this week with a 4-8 overall and 1-1 SBC record. The Owls will open the week by playing at Troy Tuesday night before their back-to-back night stretch concludes in the Murphy Center. It marks the first time in school history FAU will play on consecutive nights on the road.

Carla Stubbs leads head coach Chancellor Dugan's squad with 12.8 ppg.

The Blue Raiders will remain home this week when they play host to Florida International in a Noon Sunday tip broadcast live on SBC-TV, which will be carried by Comcast/Charter Sports Southeast (CSS).

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