Men picked first, Women second for SBC Championships

Blue Raiders travel to Arkansas State for SBC Indoor Championships

February 26, 2009 · Christian Lemon

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - On Saturday and Sunday the Middle Tennessee track and fields teams travel to Jonesboro, Ark., for the Sun Belt Conference Indoor Championships hosted by Arkansas State.

The Middle Tennessee men were picked in a tie for first place with Western Kentucky while the women were picked second behind the Hilltoppers in this week's Sun Belt coaches' poll.

The rest of the men's poll includes North Texas and Arkansas State, who finished third and fourth at last season's conference indoor meet have been picked to place the same in this year's poll. Louisiana-Monroe and South Alabama were picked fifth and sixth. UALR, Louisiana-Lafayette and Florida International were picked seventh through ninth, respectively.

Middle Tennessee's men's team has been led by Carl Morgan, DeRay Sloss, Festus Chemaoi and William Songock through the regular season. Morgan has two NCAA provisional marks to this point and Sloss has one. Both hold the top conference marks in the long jump, triple jump and 55 meter hurdles. Chemaoi holds the top conference marks in both the 800 meters and mile this season and Songock has the fastest 3000 meters.

Coach Dean Hayes said, "The Sun Belt should come down to us and Western. It is going to be a big

battle. Last year it came down to the last event [mile relay] with Western taking the championship. Every place this year will be big. Western has its strong events and we have our strong events."

On the women's side, North Texas and host Arkansas State were picked third and fourth followed by Florida Atlantic, Louisiana-Monroe and Troy. Florida International, UALR, South Alabama and Louisiana-Lafayette were picked eighth through 11th respectively.

The Middle Tennessee women are led by a strong trio of juniors in Sarah Nambawa, Brittany Cox and Zamzam Sangau that will have to score numerous points in order to bring a championship back to Murfreesboro. Nambawa has two NCAA automatic qualifiers in the long and triple jump making her and Western Kentucky's Janet Jesang the only Sun Belt athletes to have earned NCAA automatic qualifying marks so far this season. Cox has the top Sun Belt distances in the weight throw and shot put. Sangau has run the fastest conference 800 meters and mile to this point.

Hayes commented, "Last season Western beat our women pretty easily. We should keep it a lot closer this year. Nambawa, Sangau, Cox and MeLyn Thompson have performed well for us and we have really gotten a boast from transfer Nyeisha Wright in the sprints."

So far this season, the Blue Raiders and Hilltoppers have competed in five of the same meets and have combined for 57 individual wins. Both teams have had very strong individual performances; however, no meet thus far has had team scoring.

Meet coverage and results will be available Saturday and Sunday night on goblueraiders.com with live scoring available on deltatiming.com.

Men:

1t. Middle Tennessee
1t. Western Kentucky
3. North Texas
4. Arkansas State
5. ULM
6. South Alabama
7. UALR
8. Louisiana-Lafayette
9. FIU

Women:

1. Western Kentucky
2. Middle Tennessee
3. North Texas
4. Arkansas State
5. Florida Atlantic
6. ULM
7. Troy
8. FIU
9. UALR

10. South Alabama
11. Louisiana-Lafayette

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