

May 7, 2009

## Men picked first, women slated for second at SBC Championships

**Blue Raiders welcome fellow league members to town**

*Athletic Communications*

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** - The Middle Tennessee track and field teams will play host to the Sun Belt Conference Outdoor Championships this weekend at the Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium.

The Middle Tennessee men's team was picked to place first and the women were selected to finish second in the Sun Belt coaches poll.

The men edged perennial rival Western Kentucky in the voting for the top slot. North Texas came in third, Arkansas State in fourth with Louisiana-Monroe, UALR, Troy, South Alabama, Louisiana-Lafayette and Florida International rounding out the fifth through 10th spots, respectively.

The Middle Tennessee men will be led by jumper Carl Morgan and distance runner Festus Chemaoui who are both coming off first place finishes in the triple jump and 5000 meters, respectively, at the Penn Relays two weekends ago. Morgan was the recent focus of a [Daily News Journal feature story](#). Chemaoui was this year's top male scorer at the Sun Belt Indoor Championships in February.

"Carl and Festus will be very important as well as Stanley [Gbagbeke] in the jumps and William [Songock] in the distance races," said Head Coach Dean Hayes. "However, the team that does well in the sprints will have a big advantage this weekend."

In the sprints, Curtis King and Greg Franklin will compete in the 100 and 200 meters as well as some of the relays events. Both will be strong competitors. The sprints will be held Saturday and Sunday evenings and should provide some of the most exciting competition of the weekend.

Hurdlers Roscoe Payne and DeRay Sloss could have an important impact for the men. Both will compete in the 110 and 400 meter hurdles. Payne earned his first Middle Tennessee victory winning the 55-meter hurdles at the Sun Belt Indoor Championships.

On the women's side, Middle Tennessee was voted to finish second behind Western Kentucky with North Texas in third. Florida International and Florida Atlantic were picked fourth and fifth, while Arkansas State and Troy were slated for sixth and seventh. Louisiana-Monroe, UALR, South Alabama and Louisiana-Lafayette were placed eighth through 11th, respectively.



Head coach Dean Hayes will look to add two more league championships to his resume this weekend as the Blue Raiders play host to the Sun Belt Outdoor Track & Field Championships Friday-Sunday.

(Bradley Lambert) 📷

2009 Indoor All-American Sarah Nambawa will be involved in some of the toughest competition of the meet. Nambawa and Troy's Agata Cichoszewska are among the best in the country in the triple jump, each having marks in the NCAA top 10 this outdoor season. Nambawa will also participate in the long jump which figures to be one of the most competitive women's events of the weekend with eight entries having distances within one foot of North Texas' conference-leader Ashley Austin.

Brittany Cox and Zamzam Sangau will also play large roles if the Blue Raider women are to have success. To this point, the two have had spectacular junior seasons combining for 11 NCAA Midwest Regional qualifying standards and six Middle Tennessee records. Cox has the best shot put mark in the conference and Sangau has the fastest times in the 800 and 1500 meters.

"It should be close. It will be very exciting. All our athletes should be rested and ready to go this weekend," said Hayes.

The Blue Raiders have never played host to the Sun Belt Conference Outdoor Championships and have not hosted a league outdoor meet since the 2000 Ohio Valley Conference Championships. Live results will be available on [goblueraiders.com](http://goblueraiders.com) and [sunbeltsports.org](http://sunbeltsports.org).

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