

June 11, 2009

## Nine home games on tap as Blue Raider soccer unveils 2009 schedule

### Non-conference home matches include Oklahoma, Belmont and Alabama A&M

*Athletic Communications*

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** - Middle Tennessee will kick-off its 14th soccer season this fall with nine home games, including a visit from Big 12 foe Oklahoma and six Sun Belt Conference matches. The Blue Raiders enter the campaign with a 76-31-8 (.696) all-time winning percentage at home, including an astounding 50-10-4 (.813) mark in seven seasons under head coach Aston Rhoden.

"One of our goals for this year is to get back to the top of the league," Rhoden said. "The 2009 schedule will be quite challenging for us but is one I feel will help prepare our young team for a competitive SBC schedule."

The season, however, will begin on the road when MT travels to Cookeville, Tenn., for a meeting with Tennessee Tech August 21 in a series the Blue Raiders own, 10-2.

The Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium opener will be two days later, August 23, when Middle Tennessee plays host to Alabama A&M while looking for its fifth win in five games of the series. The Blue Raiders have outscored the Bulldogs 15-2 in the four previous contests.

The following weekend will feature a pair of first-time opponents when MT heads to the Buckeye State to face Wright State (August 28) and Dayton (August 30).

Oklahoma will pay its first visit to Murfreesboro September 4. The two teams battled to a scoreless tie in their only previous meeting two years ago. The weekend will conclude with a home tilt against Belmont September 6.

The non-conference portion of the schedule ends with the next two games, both on the road, when the Blue Raiders travel to Evansville (September 13) and Austin Peay (September 18).

The Sun Belt calendar will feature alternate home and away weekends. It begins with a pair of home matches to conclude the month against FIU (September 25) and Florida Atlantic (September 27).

Other home league contests include Arkansas State (October 9), UALR (October 11), North Texas (October 23) and Denver (October 25).

Middle Tennessee will travel for Sun Belt matches at Troy (October 2), South Alabama (October 4), ULM (October 16), Louisiana (October 18) and Western Kentucky (October 30).

Florida Atlantic will play host to the Sun Belt Tournament, November 4-7, in Boca Raton, Fla.

The NCAA Tournament opens November 13 with the first four rounds played on campus sites. The College Cup is slated for December 4 and 6 in College Station, Texas, on the Texas A&M campus.

"I'm confident we will be ready for such a challenging schedule and can hardly wait to get started in August," Rhoden remarked.

Eight starters and 17 letterwinners return for Rhoden's eighth season at the helm. The Blue Raiders, who posted their sixth-straight winning campaign under Rhoden in 2008, will feature their top six scorers and a veteran goalkeeper from a year ago to go along with seven newcomers.

#### 2009 Middle Tennessee Soccer Schedule

Date Opponent Time

Aug. 16 Jacksonville State (exh.) 5 p.m.

Aug. 21 at Tennessee Tech 4 p.m.

**Aug. 23 Alabama A&M 1 p.m.**

Aug. 28 at Wright State 6 p.m.

Aug. 30 at Dayton Noon

**Sept. 4 Oklahoma 7 p.m.**



Erynn Murray returns between the pipes for her final campaign in 2009, joining fellow Blue Raider seniors Sarah Beth Lee and Jen Threlkeld. (Bradley Lambert)

**Sept. 6 Belmont 1 p.m.**

Sept. 13 at Evansville 1 p.m.

Sept. 18 at Austin Peay 7 p.m.

**Sept. 25 FIU\* 7 p.m.**

**Sept. 27 Florida Atlantic\* Noon**

Oct. 2 at Troy\* 3 p.m.

Oct. 4 at South Alabama\* 1 p.m.

**Oct. 9 Arkansas State\* 7 p.m.**

**Oct. 11 UALR\* 1 p.m.**

Oct. 16 at ULM\* 4 p.m.

Oct. 18 at Louisiana\* 1 p.m.

**Oct. 23 North Texas\* 7 p.m.**

**Oct. 25 Denver\* 1 p.m.**

Oct. 30 at Western Kentucky\* 6 p.m.

Nov. 4-7 Sun Belt Tournament TBA (Boca Raton, Fla.)

Nov. 13/15 NCAA Tournament First and Second Rounds^ TBA

Nov. 20-22 NCAA Tournament Third Round^ TBA

Nov. 27-29 NCAA Tournament Fourth Round^ TBA

Dec. 4/6 NCAA College Cup TBA (College Station, Texas)

\* - Sun Belt Conference match

^ - NCAA Tournament matches played on campus sites until College Cup

All home matches in **bold** played at Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium

All times Central and subject to change

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