

October 15, 2009

Women's basketball to open practice Friday Defending SBC champs in Murphy Center from 7-9 p.m.

Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -- Middle Tennessee head women's basketball coach Rick Insell is all smiles as his team is on the eve of its first practice session of the 2009-10 season. And who would not be smiling?

Insell's Blue Raiders are coming off a 28-win season, a conference championship, an NCAA tournament appearance and a national ranking.

And they have everybody coming back, including the nation's leading scorer in **Alysha Clark**. No wonder Insell is smiling.

His Blue Raiders will hold the first practice session of the upcoming season on Friday night from 7-9 pm in Murphy Center. It is free and open to the public.

"I am very, very pleased with what we have accomplished so far," declared Insell, who has posted at least 20 wins in each of his four seasons at MT and has an overall record of 100-33. "The kids are stronger and mentally tougher. They have been working hard in the weight room. If they have enough pride and discipline to do that, then they will bring it onto the court."

Insell noted the veterans are having a big impact on the younger players in the preseason workouts. "Both **Emily Queen**, before she got hurt, and **Dana Garrett** are doing real well. Dana has worked hard to get stronger and quicker, and looks ready to play. She can take her game to a new level."

Queen, who had her knee scoped, is expected to rejoin the team in early November.

Insell also noted that he was "very happy" with what he has been able to see from his newcomers.

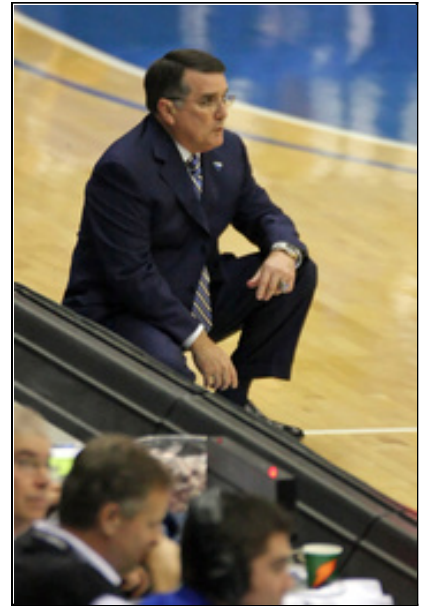
"With only two hours a week that we get to work with them, we have not seen enough of them to be able to evaluate them yet. But this time next week, we will have a better idea of what we have. They will see right quick that they need to be quicker and faster."


Insell also pointed out that this year will be an opportunity for his underclassmen to show what can be expected of them the following season.

In addition to Clark, the Raiders will return seniors **Jackie Pickel**, **Brandi Brown** and **Chelsia Lymon**, who have started since they were freshmen. Add juniors **Anne Marie Lanning** and Queen to the mix, and Insell has a very experienced core of players to call on.

Insell is aware of, but not fazed by, the many Top 25 preseason picks that have been bestowed on his team.

"We are honored by all of the preseason hype, but we are not pressured by it. There will be pressure, of course, but it will come from within the players themselves to excel."



Head coach Rick Insell's Blue Raiders will open practice to the public from 7-9 p.m. Friday inside the Murphy Center. (Bradley Lambert) 

MT will have exhibition games with Carson-Newman on November 2 and Lincoln Memorial on November 9, then officially open the season by playing host to UCF on Sunday, November 15 at 2 pm.

Printed on March 18, 2010

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/41600>