Home schedule nearing its end for Middle Tennessee

SAAC canned food drive at Denver game Wednesday

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Only two home games remain on the Middle Tennessee women's basketball docket for 2009-10 and the first is at 7 p.m. Wednesday when the Blue Raiders play host to Denver inside the Murphy Center.

Middle Tennessee brings a season-long eight-game winning streak into the contest, having improved its record to 17-5 overall and 12-1 in Sun Belt action. The Blue Raiders have outscored their opponents, on average, 90.6 to 58.2 (+32.4 ppg) during the run, including netting at least 100 points in two of their last three games.

Senior Alysha Clark continues to rank among the national and Sun Belt leaders in points per game (24.9), rebounds per game (11.0) and field goal percentage (60.4). She hit three 3-pointers for the first time in her career Saturday at South Alabama and finished with her 68th career double-double, tying for seventh on the NCAA's all-time list.

Fellow seniors Brandi Brown and Jackie Pickel, who hold two of the top three 3-pointer career marks in school history, are next in scoring for Middle Tennessee with 14.1 ppg and 14.0 ppg averages, respectively.

Pickel and classmate Chelsia Lymon are closing in on the 1,000-point plateau for their careers. Lymon is the closer of the pair, needing just 48 points, while Pickel stands 97 points away from the milestone.

Denver is 13-10 overall and 8-4 in the league entering Wednesday's matchup. The Pioneers, under the direction of second-year head coach Erik Johnson, began conference action with an 8-1 ledger but have since dropped their last three games. Denver has lost four straight overall, but boast three players with scoring averages of at least 14.0 ppg in Britteni Rice (15.3 ppg), Kaetlyn Murdoch (15.0 ppg) and Brianna Culberson (14.0 ppg).

Murdoch and Ashly Robinson are tied for the team lead with 7.7 rpg, while Murdoch paces the SBC with 66 blocked shots.

The Blue Raiders own a 9-3 lead in the all-time series, winning the last nine contests. Middle Tennessee picked up a 77-49 victory during last year's meeting, Feb. 4, in Denver.

The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee will also hold a canned food drive at the game. Fans and supporters are encouraged to bring canned food items to the gates, where members of SAAC will be located to collect the products. All proceeds will benefit the Rutherford County Food Bank.

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