

Senior trio to compete at NCAA Championships

Wright and Gbagbeke to enter long jump

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

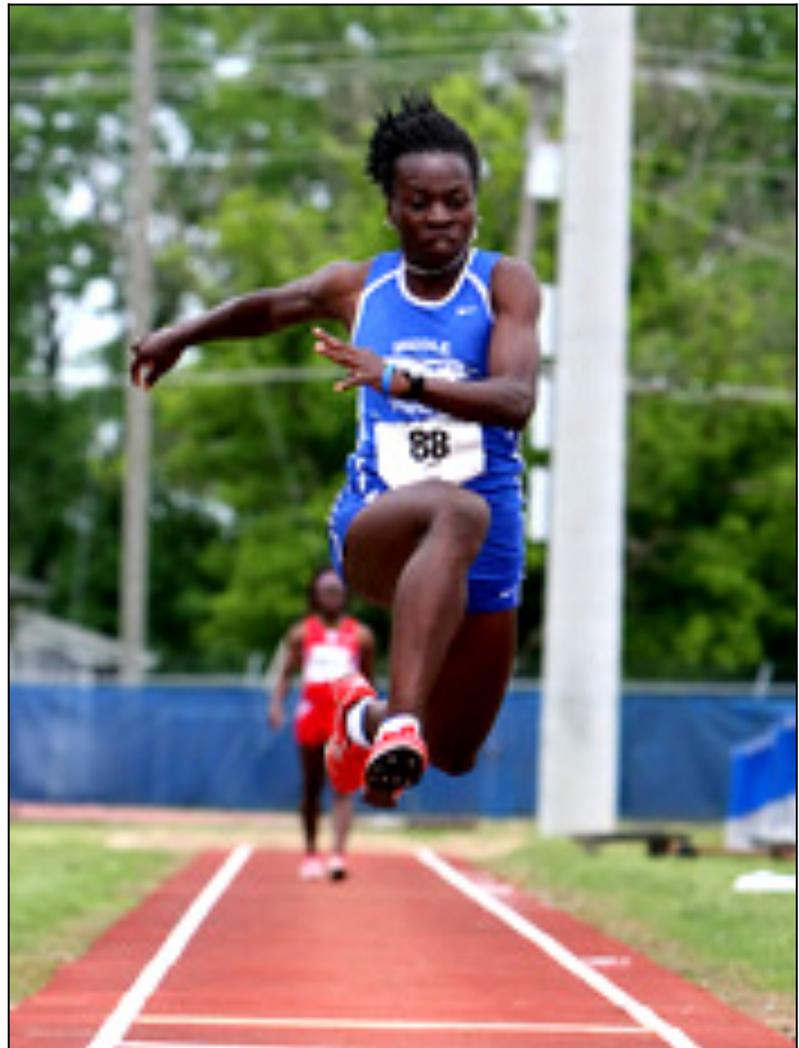
The senior track and field trio of Brittany Cox, Sarah Nambawa and Zamzam Sangau will travel to Eugene, Ore., this week to compete against the nation's best at the 2010 NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships. Long jumpers Nyeisha Wright and Stanley Gbagbeke are also scheduled for championship competition.

"When athletes get to go to the NCAA's as seniors it is a great feeling for them," said head coach Dean Hayes. "It is an opportunity to end their careers competing against the best on the college level and hopefully earn All-American honors."

In their four years in Murfreesboro, Cox, Nambawa and Sangau have been

nothing less than amazing, as the three have combined for 18 Sun Belt individual titles and 15 Middle Tennessee records on the indoor and outdoor scenes.

This will be Cox's second appearance at the national championships. The Antioch, Tenn., native placed ninth overall in the shot put at the 2009 NCAA Outdoor Championships in Fayetteville, Ark. Cox entered last weekend's NCAA Preliminary round as the 10th best shot putter in the NCAA, before tossing a 54-3.75 (16.55m) Middle Tennessee record and career best mark at the meet. She will likely need another personal best if she is to become the first Lady Raider to take an All-American title in a throwing event. The shot put competition is set to begin at 4:45 p.m., Pacific Standard Time on Saturday.



Nambawa, a three-time All-American, entered her 2010 campaign as one of the top triple jumpers in the NCAA with a viable chance to win an NCAA individual title. However, a knee injury during the indoor season, eventually resulting in a surgery, has seen the Uganda native fighting to get back in top form to earn All-American honors. At last week's NCAA East Region Preliminary, Nambawa leaped 44-3.5 (13.50m), the third longest in the NCAA this season. Nambawa will compete in the triple jump on Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

Sangau extended her sensational Blue Raider career at the NCAA East Region Preliminaries when she ran in 2:04.97 in the 800 meters to qualify for the NCAA Outdoor Finals. Although this will be her first outdoor track championships, the senior is comfortable competing on the national level as she ran at the 2009 NCAA Cross Country Championships. Sangau was the first Blue Raider female in the program's history to qualify for the meet. She will again try to turn back the calendar on Wednesday as she races in the 800 meter semifinal at 4:45 p.m. If qualified, she will run in Friday's finals.

"Zam looked very relaxed last weekend in North Carolina. She will need a great race, but has proven she deserves to compete at the highest level," said Hayes.

Wright rounds out the women competing for MT. Wright jumped an impressive 20-9.25 (6.33m) in the long jump at the East Region Preliminaries. Her mark was almost a foot longer than her previous personal best.

Gbagbeke, the lone male qualifier from Middle Tennessee, was the 2009 NCAA Outdoor runner-up in the long jump. The Nigeria native exploded on the scene late last spring and entered the 2009 championships relatively unknown. Upon taking second in the NCAA and qualifying for the 2009 IAAF World Championships, he no longer has the advantage of anonymity and will have a target on his back as one of the best at the meet. Both men's and women's long jump will be held on Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

"All five can do well. Each will have to have their best performance of the season, but they all can provide strong competition in their events."

Full results and coverage for all of Middle Tennessee's athletes at the 2010 NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships will be available on GoBlueRaiders.com.

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