Blue Raider women's basketball inks two signees

Cason, Sells added to roster for next season

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee head women's basketball coach Rick Insell has announced the addition of Shanice Cason and MacKenzie Sells to his women's basketball roster for 2011-12, as the pair signed National Letters of Intent Wednesday.

"We are very excited about our two signees," Insell said. "We feel very comfortable with what we already have here in the program and these two will only add to it.

"At this point, we are not sure if we will sign anybody else, but if a great player comes along, then we will certainly be in the mix."

Cason is a 5-6 point guard hailing from Murfreesboro's Siegel High School, where she was coached by head coach Alan Bush. She garnered an 87 scouts grade by ESPN HoopGurlz and received most of her attention on the AAU circuit, playing for coach Tom Insell's Tennessee Flight Silver. She helped the program capture titles at the prestigious Premier 64 and Battle of the Boro showcase events this past summer. For her high school team, she averaged 13.2 points, 6.2 assists, 5.6 rebounds and 3.3 steals per game as a junior, while hitting on 72 percent of her free throws. Cason has been an all-district and all-region first team honoree all three years entering her senior campaign.

"Shanice comes in as a point guard, much like a (former Blue Raider) Chelsia Lymon. She is hard-

nosed, quick and can defend. She can also shoot the 3, slash and run the floor. She is the type of point guard a program needs to take it to the next level. With what Lymon did here, we felt that was the prototype player we wanted and feel like Cason fits that mold."

Sells is a 5-10 shooting guard hailing from Livingston Academy in Livingston, Tenn., where she was coached by Lesley Riddle. A teammate of Cason's on Tennessee Flight Silver, the pair helped the travel team to the Nike Nationals championship in August. She was included as one of 16 players on the Launching Pad list put together by HoopGurlz for its Best of Summer: Skills Edition story. She has collected a number of high school honors throughout her career, including being named to the 2A state all-tournament team after leading Livingston to a state runner-up finish in 2009. As a junior in 2010, she was chosen as the District 8-2A Most Valuable Player, just two seasons after collecting the district's Freshman of the Year accolade. Sells also was picked as an all-tournament team selection in Region 4-2A after her freshman and junior years and as the region's Most Valuable Player in 2009. She completed her junior campaign averaging 15.5 points, 5.4 rebounds and 3.0 steals, while converting 47.7 percent of her field goal attempts.

"MacKenzie is another great shooter and one of the best coming in. We lost players like Jackie Pickel and Brandi Brown last year, but we currently have players like Jordyn Luffman, Laken Leonard and Janay Brinkley and now we have added one more to fit into that stable. She comes from a highly successful high school program."

Middle Tennessee will open its regular season at 1 p.m. Sunday when it plays host to USF inside the Murphy Center. Tickets are available by calling 1-888-YES-MTSU.

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