Butler leads men at Blue Raider Invitational

Senior just misses matching career best

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee's Josh Butler leapt an impressive 51-3.25 (15.62m) in the triple jump, to take the event and lead the Blue Raiders at the 2011 Blue Raider Invitational on Saturday.

Butler entered the weekend with the NCAA's 10th longest triple jump. His jump today will improves his top conference mark and will likely move him up the collegiate ranks once all the weekend's results are posted. He was a quarter a an inch from matching a personal best set a the 2010 Sun Belt Outdoor Championships.

The Glassboro, N.J., native also took second in the high jump, marking 6-6 (1.98m).

Teammates Cordario Golden and Kameron Rory finished second and fourth in the triple jump with respective marks of 47-8 (14.52m) and 43-3.5 (13.19m).

Roscoe Payne ran to victory in the 55 meters hurdles in 7.50. He also placed third in the 200 meters. His time of 22.05 is unofficially third in the SBC. Payne currently holds the fastest 55 meter hurdles time in the Sun Belt, 7.40, run at December's MT Christmas Invitational.

Kendall Bacchus and Steven Palmer came in second and fourth in the 200 with respective times of 21.99 and 22.15.

Kenneth Gilstrap won the 55 meter dash in 6.35. His time of 6.32 from the preliminary heat is

unofficially the second fastest in the conference this season.

"Getting Ken (Gilstap) fit to run is big for us," said head coach Dean Hayes. "He has the speed to score for us at the conference meet."

On the women's side, Cherice Robertson and Nyeisha Wright performed well, each winning and event and taking second in another.

Robertson finished first in the 55 meter hurdles in 7.95, bettering her season best. She then finished runner-up the high jump, matching a career best of 5-8 (1.73m).

The Blue Raiders had three runners qualify for the finals of the 55 meter hurdles with Rosina Amenebede and Ann Dudley moving through the preliminary heats. Amenebede took second in 8.25. Dudley was disqualified for a false start.

Wright's victory came in the long jump, garnered off a 19-11.25 (6.07m) leap. She would go on to be the top collegiate finisher in the 55 meter dash in a winning time of 7.24. Amenebede placed second in the long jump with a mark of 19-0 (5.76m).

"Having Rosina adds depth to the women's team," said Hayes. "Along with some others, she should help us, scoring in multiple events."

Amber Jackson ran the fastest 400 meters in the Sun Belt in a winning time of 56.17. The time is an indoor personal best.

In the triple jump, France Makabu leapt 40-0 (12.19m) to take a collegiate victory.

All conference and NCAA standings will be official Sunday evening once all weekend's meet are reported.

The team's return to action next weekend as they will travel to Kentucky to take part in the Rod McCravy Memorial. Full results and coverage will be available on GoBlueRaiders.com.

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