

# Battle of division leaders set for Sunday

## Game on CSS at 1 p.m.

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**LITTLE ROCK, Ark.** - The two top teams in the Sun Belt Conference will meet at 1 p.m. Sunday when Middle Tennessee plays at UALR inside the Jack Stephens Center in Little Rock, Ark., live on the Sun Belt Network. The two programs have met in each of the last two Sun Belt Tournament championship games with the Blue Raiders prevailing both times to earn the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

Middle Tennessee owns the conference's top record at 22-5 overall and 13-1 in the Sun Belt entering the matchup. The Blue Raiders, who have already clinched the East Division crown for the third-straight year, are coming off an 80-61 victory at Troy Thursday night. Sophomore Icelyn Elie led the squad with game highs of 23 points and 13 rebounds, her third career double-double. Senior Anne Marie Lanning and freshman Ebony Rowe added 16 and 13 points, respectively.



Rowe continues to top the team with averages of 17.3 points and 10.2 rebounds, while Lanning is next at 12.9 points per game. Elie gives MT a trio in double digits with 11.2 ppg, while ranking behind Rowe at 5.7 rebounds per outing.

UALR is 11-1 in league action and 17-6 overall coming into the meeting. Chastity Reed, the preseason player of the year in the league, sets the tone offensively with 18.5 points per game, more than double her next closest teammate, Marian Kursh, with 8.6 ppg. The pair is also the top-two rebounders for the Trojans, with Reed holding a slim, 6.2-to-6.1, edge, although only six of her total

caroms are on the offensive glass.

Head coach Joe Foley is in his eighth season directing the UALR program, leading it to its first NCAA Tournament a year ago where it advanced to the NCAA Tournament as an at-large selection.

Middle Tennessee owns a 15-4 edge in the all-time series following its dramatic, 70-68, overtime triumph in last year's Sun Belt Tournament championship game when All-American Alysha Clark hit the winning layup with 1.8 seconds left. The Blue Raiders hold a slim, 5-3, advantage in games played in Little Rock.

Lyn Rollins will handle play-by-play with Debbie Leonard serving as color analyst for the Sun Belt Network broadcast, which will be shown locally in Murfreesboro on Comcast/Charter Sports Southeast (CSS), channel 27.

Dick Palmer will also have the action on the Blue Raider Network, including WGNS (100.5 FM, 101.9 FM, 1450 AM), WMOT (89.5 FM) and WBRY (96.7 FM, 1540 AM).

Tickets are available for the Sun Belt Tournament, to be held March 6-8 in Hot Springs, Ark., for the third-straight season. Tournament booklets are \$83 and can be purchased by calling the Middle Tennessee ticket office at 1-888-YES-MTSU or stopping by the ticket office at Gate 1A of Floyd Stadium.

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