Track to run in Nashville

Hayes looking to improve relays

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee track and field teams are set to compete at the Boston-Moon Invitational on Saturday in Nashville, Tenn., hosted by Tennessee State.

With three outdoor meets already in the books this season, head coach Dean Hayes has the teams focusing more and more on relay events. Relay-events have always been a core element of a successful Blue Raider team.

"I have always put emphasis on the relays," Hayes said. "Relays are the one event you really have a team effort. They help bring the athletes together and get them excited to compete together. Relays improve some athletes' performances in open events as well."

Relay success has proven it can translate to victories at conference meets as the Middle Tennessee men have 22 championships when winning a multi-athlete race. The Blue Raider men have swept both relays at an indoor or outdoor meet on nine occasions. For the women, eight of their 14 conference titles came when taking a relay.

At the 2011 Sun Belt Indoor Championships, the MT men's team of Nathaniel Moore, Robert Carter, Steven Palmer and Noah Akwu won the 4x400-meter relay to clinch the team crown.

"The 4x100-meter relay is usually early in the meet. If you run well in this race, it gets the athletes going. Most meets conclude with the 4x400. Running well in this race, lets you leave feeling good about yourself."

Entering the Boston-Moon meet, the men's 4x400-meter relay teams sits second in the conference after a 3:11.25 mark last weekend in Auburn. The women's 4x100 relay is fourth in 46.43.

This weekend in Nashville, Carter, Akwu, Kendall Bacchus and Palmer are expected to run the 4x100. Carter, Akwu and Palmer will then join Roscoe Payne to compete in the 4x400.

On the women's side, Kiara Henry, Nyeisha Wright, Kortney Thurman and Rosina Amenbede are slated to run the 4x100. The 4x400 team has yet to be determined.

"We are still experimenting with some of the teams, but we will have them set by conference time. When set, they should be pretty competitive in the league and have a chance to make the NCAA."

Post-meet coverage of the Blue Raider relays and both track and field teams at the Boston-Moon Invitational will be available at GoBlueRaiders.com.

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