

Track to run at Penn Relays

Famous meet awaits athletes

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Middle Tennessee's top track and field athletes will travel to Philadelphia Thursday through Saturday to compete at the prestigious Penn Relays Carnival.

The Penn Relays is the oldest and largest track competition held in the United States. The event has been hosted annually since April 21, 1895 by the University of Pennsylvania at Franklin Field.

Middle Tennessee is currently scheduled to compete in a handful of relays and field events over the three days.

Thursday will see the trio of Kortney Thurman, Nyeisha Wright and Kiara Henry competing in the long jump. Thurman currently leads the Sun Belt in the event with a mark of 20-11-.25 (6.38m) and sits with the third-best mark in the NCAA East Region.

Cherice Robertson and Ann Dudley will compete in the high jump.

The women's 4x400-meter relay team is scheduled to run in Thursday's preliminary rounds. If qualified, the team would move to Friday's finals. Festus Chemaoui will also compete in the Men's 5,000 Meter Championships on Friday. Chemaoui placed 13th in the event last year.

The women's 4x100- and 4x200-meter relay teams and the men's 4x200 and 4x400 squads will run first-round heats. The finals for each race will be Saturday.

Also scheduled Friday will be the hurdle events. Roscoe Payne has been slated to run the men's



400-meter intermediate race, while Amenbede and Robertson will enter in the women's 100-meter contest. Triple jumpers Makabu, Thurman and Dudley will leap, rounding out second-day competition.

Middle Tennessee's only athletes to compete Saturday will be Friday relay teams who advance past preliminary heats..

Head coach Dean Hayes has been sending his teams to Penn for many years and as a result has seen great success.

"It is a great reward for the athletes," Hayes said. "The crowds will be over 100,000 strong for the three days and it gives the program a chance to get noticed on the national level. Over the years, we have seen some great performances."

The program's greatest achievement came in the early 90's, when Dean Hayes' 4x200-meter relay team won the event in 1993. The squad defended their title the following year. The Blue Raiders' times led the country both years when all times were compiled at the end of the respective seasons.

Follow the Blue Raiders at all days of the 2011 Penn Relays at GoBlueRaiders.com.

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