Track to run on international stage

Three current athletes and four alumni to run in international meets

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Although the 2011 Middle Tennessee Track and Field schedule is in the books, a group of Blue Raiders and Alumni will continue their seasons as they represent their home nations in multiple international meets throughout the summer.

Since the program's beginning, head coach Dean Hayes has recruited international athletes to help bring his teams to the high level of competition they run at today. However, Hayes has also encouraged these athletes to enter world-wide meets to perform for their country.

Hayes said, "Competing on the international level is always great experience for the athlete. However, I encourage it because it gives the opportunity to see the world and encounter cultures and societies they may not have known. Our athletes have had success at the highest levels of these meets, including Tommy Haynes and Brian Oldfield each reaching the final rounds of the Olympics."

2011 NCAA All-American Noah Akwu will run at the 2011 Nigeria/ExxonMobil Athletics Championships in Calabari, Nigeria June 23-25. Depending on his performance, Akwu could represent Nigeria at the IAAF World Championships later this summer in Daegu, Korea. He is expected to enter the 200- and 400-meter dashes.

Stanley Gbagbeke will also compete at the Nigeria championship. Gbagbeke, a two-time All-American and Blue Raider alumnus, represented Nigeria in the long jump at the 2009 IAAF World Championships in Berlin upon taking his domestic crown in the event earlier that summer. He is expected to qualify for the World Championships again this summer as he currently sits on the IAAF "B" List in the event.

Alumna Sarah Nambawa will jump for her home nation of Uganda in Shenzhen, China on August 12-23 at the 2011 Summer Universiade (World University Games). Last summer, Nambawa took gold at

the 2010 African Championships in Nairobi, Kenya. Her winning mark of 45-9.25 (13.95m) set a Ugandan national record. Nambawa was a four-time NCAA All-American in her four years at Middle Tennessee.

Hurdler Rosina Amenbede will is also scheduled to compete in at the 2011 Universiade. Amenbede, a junior-transfer to Middle Tennessee, will compete for her home-nation of Ghana. She took earned fifth-place finishes in the 55-meter and 100-meter hurdles at the 2011 Sun Belt Indoor and Outdoor Championships. Her season-best time of 13.64 qualified her for last month's NCAA Outdoor East Region Preliminaries in Bloomington, Ind.

Alumni twin-brothers Carl and Carlos Morgan round out those who will participate at an international meet this summer. They will represent the Cayman Islands at the Pan-American on Games on October 14-30 in Guadalajara, Mexico. The duo are likely to enter the long and triple jumps as well as some of the relays.

France Makabu rounds out the Middle Tennessee athletes scheduled to compete over-seas. Makabu will enter the triple jump in the French National Championships. Like Amenebede, Makabu also competed in Bloomington's Regional Preliminaries.

"By recruiting internationals, they are given the opportunity to see America. Hopefully, when they return to their country, they will bring back a positive image of the United States."

Stay tuned to GoBlueRaiders.com all summer for updates Middle Tennessee track and field coverage.

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