Road schedule begins Friday for Blue Raider soccer

Return trip to Auburn for Whitworth

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – The Middle Tennessee soccer team will hit the road for its first away match of the season Friday when it travels to Auburn, Ala., to face the Auburn Tigers at 7 p.m. The Blue Raiders had opened the 2011 campaign with a pair of home games last weekend.

“We are looking forward to returning to the field and putting together a solid 90 minutes,” head coach Aston Rhoden said. “Auburn is a very strong team, much like we faced last weekend with Dayton and Jacksonville State, and we cannot afford to let our opportunities pass us by.”

Middle Tennessee split its two home matches, earning a 1-0 double-overtime win Sunday against Jacksonville State. Senior forward Shan Jones knocked in the winning goal with just over six minutes remaining on the clock, while classmate Rebecca Cushing posted one save in her first shutout of the campaign.

Jones also netted the team’s first goal of the season, Friday against Dayton, on an assist from junior Whitney Jorgenson. Jorgenson later added a score of her own, just 10 seconds into the second half versus the Flyers.

Auburn fell in its opener, 4-1, to No. 18 Wake Forest. The Tigers feature a pair of the Top 50 players nationally according to TopDrawerSoccer.com, Katy Frierson and Julie King. Frierson is also on the

Hermann Watch List.

The trip to Auburn also marks the return to the Plains for Blue Raider assistant coach Allison Whitworth, a former Tiger standout. She graduated from Auburn in 2007 and recently completed her third season as a goalkeeper in the Women's Professional Soccer league.

Middle Tennessee and Auburn both were participants in the NCAA Tournament regional site last November in Tallahassee, Fla., although they did not face each other.

The two teams have met only once previously, during Rhoden's first season at the helm of the Blue Raider program in 2002, with the Tigers prevailing, 5-0, Sept. 13.

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