Another weekend split up next for Blue Raiders

MT soccer returns home Sunday afternoon

September 8, 2011 · Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – The Middle Tennessee soccer team will play on the road Friday and at home Sunday, just like last weekend, when it returns to field at Vanderbilt and then at the friendly confines of Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium two days later to play host to Alabama A&M.

“This is a critical weekend for us, as we are nearing the start of conference play in just a few short weeks,” head coach Aston Rhoden said. “We need to continue to get better each match, regardless of who the opponent may be, and prepare the same way.

“Both opponents this weekend will present a challenge to us in different ways because of their style of play.”

The match at Vanderbilt will represent the third-straight Friday road Southeastern Conference contest for the Blue Raiders. Middle Tennessee has played at Auburn and No. 23 Tennessee the last two Fridays.

The Commodores have started the campaign 4-1 and are coming off a tournament championship at the Dafeldecker Classic in Tampa, Fla., last weekend. Vanderbilt, under the direction of first-year head coach Derek Greene, knocked off host USF before defeating College of Charleston to round out the weekend.

Despite the proximity, Friday's match will mark just the fourth meeting in the series and the first since the 2008 MT home opener. The Commodores have won each of the previous three meetings; however, the last two matchups, including the only other contest played in Nashville in 2006, have been decided by one goal.

Alabama A&M has struggled in the early portion of its 2011 schedule, owning a 0-5 ledger entering Sunday's match. The Bulldogs, coached by Frank Davies, have been outscored 45-0 and outshot 156-7 in their first-five matches.

The Blue Raiders are 6-0 all-time against AAMU following last season's 4-0 victory to improve the all-time scoring margin to 30-3 in the series. Included in the matchups was an 11-1 Middle Tennessee triumph in 2009, the last time the two teams met in Murfreesboro. The Blue Raiders set single-game school records with 11 goals, 12 assists and 34 points that afternoon and then-sophomore Shan Jones tied the school mark with four goals on her way to collecting Sun Belt Player of the Week accolades.

The Blue Raiders will be looking to replicate that success this weekend after starting the season 1-4. Middle Tennessee fell 2-0 at No. 23 Tennessee Friday before dropping a 1-0 decision to UT-Martin at home Sunday for its third-straight setback.

Sunday's contest will be International Day at Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium.

Printed on December 12, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/54685