Women’s basketball set to open practice Monday

Open session to start at 1:30 p.m. in Murphy Center

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – Middle Tennessee women’s basketball will open a new season when it holds its first official practice at 1:30 p.m. Monday at the Murphy Center. The session is open to the public and Blue Raider supporters are invited to attend.

Middle Tennessee finished 2010-11 with a 23-8 record, including 14-2 in the Sun Belt, and advanced to the 14th NCAA Tournament in program history. The Blue Raiders won the conference’s East Division outright for the third-straight season before falling to Georgia in the NCAAs after earning only the second at-large bid in school history.

Molly McFadden is the lone senior on this year’s young squad, which also features four juniors, a redshirt sophomore, five true sophomores, a redshirt freshman and a true freshman. Ebony Rowe, a 2011 Freshman All-American and the 2011 Sun Belt Freshman of the Year, returns after leading the team with 17.1 points and 10.1 rebounds per game.

She is joined by fellow returning starters, juniors Kortni Jones and Icelyn Elie, and sophomore Jordyn Luffman. Jones handed out 159 assists a year ago, second most all-time by a Blue Raider, while Elie had a breakout campaign and Luffman provided the most minutes by any freshman a year ago.

Returning players who also saw action last season include juniors Jamila Ajanaku and Dymon Raynor, redshirt sophomore Lauren March and true sophomores Janay Brinkley, Laken Leonard and KeKe Stewart.

Redshirt freshman Stephanie Myers will be looking to hit the floor for the first time after redshirting a year ago, while true freshman Shanice Cason joins the squad and will be looking to provide depth at the guard position.

Head coach Rick Insell returns for his seventh season in charge of the program. The two-time Sun Belt Coach of the Year has amassed a 148-47 (.759) record in his six seasons, leading MT into the postseason each year.

The Blue Raiders are allotted 30 practices until the start of the season, which will be Nov. 11 in University Park, Pa., at the Penn State-hosted Lady Lion Classic. Middle Tennessee will open the tournament by facing UNC Wilmington before playing the winner of Penn State and Washington State in the second game.

Season tickets for Blue Raider basketball are also on sale by contacting the MT ticket office at 1-888-YES-MTSU or logging onto goblueraiders.com. Season tickets are $100 or can be bought as a combo pack with the men's tickets for $210. Single game information can also be obtained by contacting the ticket office. Group ticket information can be acquired by calling the Blue Raider Sales and Marketing office at 615-898-5322.

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