

Home opener for Blue Raiders set for Thursday

Women's basketball returns home with 1-1 record

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. –

The Middle Tennessee women's basketball team will return to the friendly confines of the historic Murphy Center at 7 p.m. Thursday as it plays host to South Dakota State in the Blue Raiders' home opener.

Middle Tennessee enters the game with a 1-1 mark after splitting its two contests last weekend at the Lady Lion Classic in University Park, Pa. The Blue Raiders started the campaign with a 79-60 victory over UNC Wilmington Friday, the fourth-straight season-opening win, before falling to No. 12/14 Penn State Sunday, 65-49, to earn a runner-up result at the four-team tournament.

Junior Kortni Jones and sophomore Ebony Rowe earned all-tournament accolades. Jones led MT in scoring with 19.0 ppg,

including a career-high 25 in the UNCW triumph, while Rowe posted a double-double in each game for 17.0 ppg and 13.0 rpg averages. The Preseason Sun Belt co-Player of the Year has now netted double-figure points in 30-straight games and raised her career double-double total to 18.

South Dakota State, guided by 12th-year head coach Aaron Johnston, owns a 2-0 record after starting with a 74-35 win over St. Cloud State and an 84-73 triumph against Utah State over the weekend. Thursday's game will be the first time the Jackrabbits hit the road this season.



Two South Dakota State players average double-figure scoring, led by Jill Young's 19.0 ppg. Ashley Eide is second with 17.0 ppg, while sharing the team lead in rebounding with Katie Lingle at 6.5 rpg.

The Blue Raiders earned a 70-51 in last season's meeting, Nov. 28 in Murfreesboro, after starting the contest with a 19-0 spurt. The Middle Tennessee victory closed the all-time series to 3-2 in the Jackrabbits' favor. Thursday's game will be the fourth in the series played inside the historic Murphy Center.

All the action can be heard on the Blue Raider Network of stations, including WMOT (89.5 FM) and WGNS (1450 AM, 100.5 FM, 101.9 FM) with Dick Palmer handling play-by-play and Duane Hickey serving as the color analyst.

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