

Women's basketball set to close 2011 calendar season

Blue Raiders looking for 16th straight against Lady Jags

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. –

The Middle Tennessee women's basketball will be looking to extend its current three-game winning streak when it plays host to South Alabama at Noon Saturday in the final game for both teams of 2011. The Sun Belt East Division matchup will be televised on the league's TV network, with Comcast/Charter Sports Southeast (CSS) carrying the game locally in Murfreesboro on channel 27. The Blue Raiders started their current run with a win over Tennessee State Dec. 18 and most recently completed a 70-58 triumph against No. 6/6 Kentucky Wednesday night in arguably the biggest victory in school history. It was MT's fourth win over a nationally-ranked opponent, and third in the last seven years, and the Wildcats' ranking tied for the highest in the four victories. The three-game winning streak, which also included a Sun Belt-opening triumph over



FIU Dec. 21, improved Middle Tennessee's overall record to 9-5, including a 5-2 mark inside the historic Murphy Center. Sophomore Ebony Rowe posted her eighth double-double of the season in Wednesday's triumph, tallying 21 points and hauling in a game-high 12 rebounds. She hit 7-of-8 free throws, helping her team to a season-best 86.4 percent (19-of-22) from the charity stripe. Freshman Shanice Cason has continued to play well in December, handing out 35 assists and boasting a +1.7 assist-to-turnover ratio during the seven games thus far in the month. Her assist total is nearly double the 18 she distributed in the seven contests of November. South Alabama brings a

7-5 record into Saturday's tip and it has not played a Sun Belt game thus far, joining Louisiana as the only two teams yet to compete in a league contest this season. The Ragin' Cajuns conference opener is also Saturday, as they play host to Florida Atlantic. The Lady Jags' last victory came Dec. 10, as they knocked off Talladega College at home, 57-52. Camille Reynolds and Mansa El pace head coach Rick Pietri's squad with identical 11.7 points per game averages. Taylor Ammons grabs a team-high 7.4 rebounds per game. The Blue Raiders own a 17-4 all-time lead in the series, including wins in the last 15 meetings. Middle Tennessee is a perfect 13-0 against South Alabama since head coach Rick Insell took over prior to the 2005-06 campaign. In addition to the Sun Belt Network TV broadcast, the game can also be heard on the Blue Raider Network with Dick Palmer (play-by-play) and Duane Hickey (color analyst) handling the call on WMOT (89.5 FM) and WGNS (1450 AM, 100.5 FM, 101.9 FM). The tilt will precede a men's game, also with South Alabama, to immediately follow at 2:30 p.m. Also, 2012 Sun Belt Conference Tournament booklets are now on sale at the Middle Tennessee athletic ticket office. Cost per booklet is \$83 and includes a ticket to all eight sessions of the Sun Belt Championships, March 3-6, in Hot Springs, Ark. Fans can purchase booklets by calling 1-888-YES-MTSU or visiting goblueraiders.com.

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