

Softball Opens 2012 Season at Charlotte Classic

Charlotte, Kansas and Stony Brook await MT

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CHARLOTTE, N.C. -- The Middle Tennessee softball program begins its 20th season and fifth under head coach Sue Nevar when the Blue Raiders begin play this weekend at the Charlotte Classic.



The Blue Raiders will open the four-team tournament on Friday with a matchup against Kansas at 9 a.m. CT followed by a tilt with Stony Brook at 3 p.m. On Saturday, Middle

Tennessee will face host Charlotte at 11 a.m. and then will encounter a rematch with one of the other tournament participants at either 1 or 3 p.m. The action will conclude on Sunday with the consolation game at 10 a.m. followed by the championship game scheduled for noon.

“We are definitely excited to get the season under way,” said Middle Tennessee head coach Sue Nevar. “I have been very pleased with our focus and intensity in preseason practice recently and look forward to taking the field this weekend in Charlotte.”

The Blue Raiders return six starters from last year’s squad including three of four infielders to go along with Natalie Ysais who will return for her third season as the squad’s starting catcher.

“We will have a very seasoned infield this year,” Nevar said. “All of our starters return from 2011 with the exception of the shortstop position, so our team will without question benefit from the experience we have at these critical positions.”

Three experienced pitchers who totaled more than 200 innings pitched last season will lead a staff of five hurlers hoping to provide the Blue Raiders with consistency in the circle.

“Our staff features five players who each have a different look to them,” said Nevar. “Their various qualities will give us lots of flexibility at the position which very few teams have. As long as they stay within themselves, they can all be very good for us this season.”

Middle Tennessee will welcome the addition of six newcomers to the team in 2012. Three infielders,

a pair of outfielders and a pitcher comprise the new Blue Raiders who will be counted on to fill a couple of starting positions and provide depth at other spots.

“The newcomers have progressed nicely through fall and preseason practice,” Nevar said. “They will have opportunities to show what they can do and earn some playing time. All of them are competitive and eager to contribute, so we are expecting some big things from them.

“Above all else, we have emphasized the concept of being a true team in 2012. If we work hard together and play as a team, there is no limit to what we can achieve this year beginning this weekend in Charlotte.”

Follow every pitch of the Charlotte Classic via live stats courtesy of Charlotte which can be accessed [here](#). Periodic updates will also be provided via the Middle Tennessee softball social media pages on Twitter @MT_Softball and on Facebook at the MTSU Softball page.

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