Blue Raiders set for NCAA Tournament action Sunday

MT set to face Vanderbilt on ESPN2 at 4:10 p.m.

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Middle Tennessee women's basketball team will make its 15th NCAA Tournament appearance when it travels the short distance to Nashville, Tenn., to battle Vanderbilt in First Round action at 4:10 p.m. Sunday live on ESPN2. The Blue Raiders, the No. 10 seed in the Fresno Region, and the Commodores, the No. 7 seed, are meeting for the first time since 1992. Middle Tennessee earned an at-large bid to the field for just the third time in program history after posting a 26-6 overall and 16-0 Sun Belt record thus far. The Blue Raiders have played in the NCAA Tournament in eight of the last nine seasons, including six of seven years under head coach Rick Insell. This season marks the fourth-straight trip to the NCAAs for MT, matching the longest consecutive run in program history. Junior Kortni Jones paces the offense with 17.0 points per game and a school and conference record 113 3-pointers, placing her second nationally. The All-Sun Belt First Team and All-Sun Belt Tournament Team selection is having her best season offensively. Sophomore Ebony Rowe is just behind Jones in scoring with 16.5 points per game to go along with her team-high 9.9 rebounds per contest. Rowe was tabbed a WBCA All-Region Team pick this past week after joining Jones on the league's first team and all-tournament squad. Rowe has posted 15 double-doubles this season, lifting her career total to 31. Junior Icelyn Elie rounds out the solid offensive trio for the Middle Tennessee attack. She is third in scoring with 13.9 per game, while her 7.7 rebounds

per outing are next in line behind Rowe. Elie was an All-Sun Belt Second Team honoree and also rounded out the MT representatives on the All-Sun Belt Tournament Team. Vanderbilt brings a 22-9 overall and 9-7 SEC ledger into the contest. The Commodores have won just twice in their last five games but are 17-1 inside Memorial Gymnasium this season under 10th-year head coach Melanie Balcomb. Christina Foggie paces the squad with 17.8 points per game, which also led all Southeastern Conference players. She is one of four Vanderbilt players to average double-figure points. The Blue Raiders lead the all-time series 10-7, having won the first six meetings and eight of the opening nine contests. Sunday's game will be aired on ESPN2 with Dave Pasch and Debbie Antonelli handling the play-by-play and color analyst duties, respectively. It can also be heard on the Blue Raider Network with Dick Palmer and Duane Hickey on WMOT (89.5 FM) and WGNS (1450 AM, 100.5 FM, 101.9 FM).

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