Softball announces fall schedule

Schedule features two home, two away games

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Head coach Jeff Breeden has announced his team's fall schedule for the upcoming 2012-13 season. Practice will begin Sept. 17 and the team will play four games.

"We're looking to place our kids in the right positions," Breeden said. "We're using Fall to try to get them in the right place, try to see what we have pitching wise, and try to juggle our batting order to where we think it is going in, and by the end of Fall have a good depth chart for Spring."

Breeden's debut comes alongside a youthful roster, with just eight upperclassmen (four seniors, four juniors), six sophomores and nine freshmen.

Junior Kayla Toney returns to the field after leading the team in batting average (.410), but several other 2012 leaders are gone, most notably Kaycee Popham (50 hits, 10 home runs, 27 RBI), Kelsey Woodruff (.328 average, nine doubles, 44 hits) and Natalie Ysais (25 RBI, 38 hits, 16 walks).

While experience is lacking from the plate, the Blue Raiders graduated just one pitcher last season., Caty Jutson, who led the team in nearly every category, including wins (8), strikeouts (48) and innings pitched (134.0), but several talented pitchers remain, including Kailey McDougald (team leading 3.36 ERA), Shelby Stinnett (36 strikeouts) and Caitlin McClure (only four home runs allowed).

"You are always looking at the seniors for leadership and some maturity, and we hope that the freshmen coming in are going to show a little bit maturity, Breeden said. "We'll look at them in the fall to see if they're going to be able to play this spring—you know, are they going to be able to come in and step right in, or is going to take a little time, take a year or two to get them acclimated?"

As for the schedule, Breeden mentioned several reasons for choosing the opponents he did.

"We're playing the two junior college teams to see if they have some pitching that we want to recruit, or if they have a position player is coming out that we want to recruit pretty heavily," Breeden said.

The others, Lipscomb and Trevecca, were based on location, as both are "right down the road."

Breeden also chose Trevecca for his familiarity with the program.

"I've got a friendship with their coach already and know a lot of their players," Breeden said. "So, it should be kind of a reunion there when we play them, between our players and their players."

The fall schedule is as follows:

Date Opponent Time

9/27 at Columbia State 5:00 and 7:00 PM

10/3 Volunteer State 5:00 and 7:00 PM

10/13 at Lipscomb 2:00 and 4:00 PM

10/20 Trevecca Nazarene 2:00 and 4:00 PM

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