MT and Iowa square-off in WNIT semifinals on Wednesday

Blue Raiders tip with Hawkeyes at 7 p.m.

November 13, 2012 · @MTAthletics

Wednesday marks a great opportunity for the Middle Tennessee women's basketball as the Raiders look for a 3-0 start this season. MT travels to Iowa for a Preseason WNIT semifinal matchup. Tip is set for 7 p.m. Central at Carver-Hawkeye Arena in Iowa City, Iowa.

GAME INFORMATION

Opponent: Iowa (2-0), Preseason WNIT Semifinals
Date: Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2012
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Iowa City, Iowa
Arena: Carver-Hawkeye Arena (15,400)

SERIES INFORMATION

Overall: First Meeting
At Iowa: Same
Under Rick Insell: First Meeting

MEDIA INFORMATION

Live Webstream: HawkeyeSports.com (subscription fee required)
Radio: WMOT (89.5 FM)/WGNS (1450 AM, 101.9 FM, 100.5 FM)
Play-by-Play: Dick Palmer

QUICK HITTERS

• Middle Tennessee (2-0) is coming off an 82-68 victory against in-state rival Memphis on Sunday afternoon. The Blue Raiders advance to the Preseason WNIT semifinals and face the Iowa Hawkeyes for the first time on the hardwood.

• Icelyn Elie tallied career-highs with 30 points and 13 made field goals. She tied a personal best with three treys, while grabbing five rebounds and four assists in 40 minutes of action.
• The Raiders have three players averaging double figures, all of which were preseason first team All-Sun Belt selections. Ebony Rowe leads the way with 21 ppg, followed by Elie with 20. Kortni Jones has a team-best seven triples, while boasting 17.5 points per contest.
• In Monday's Associated Press Top 25 poll, the Blue Raiders came in 27th with 82 points. The Raiders are 28th in the USA Today Sports / ESPN Coaches' poll released on Tuesday.

In-Season Tournament History

• Middle Tennessee plays in its third in-season tournament in three years.
• Last year, the Raiders went 1-1 at the Lady Lion Classic. MT defeated UNC Wilmington, 79-60, before falling to Penn State, 65-49.
• MT owns a 10-3 record under Insell in six in-season tournaments. MT has won six out of their last seven games in tournament action.
• The Blue Raiders own a 65-54 all-time record during 54 in-season tournaments during the program's history.

About the WNIT

• For the second time in the Insell era, the Blue Raiders are participating in the Preseason WNIT Tournament. MT opened the 2008-09 campaign with a win over Lafayette College before falling to No. 2 Oklahoma and rebounding against Indiana.
• Middle Tennessee and Iowa are meeting for the first time in program history.
• The winner of Wednesday's matchup will play the winner of the Georgetown at North Carolina contest at a home campus site to be determined.

Rowe Grabs Trifecta of Weekly Honors

• MT junior forward Ebony Rowe collected three honors this week after posting 21 points and nine rebounds against KSU and Memphis. Rowe was named the player of the week by the Sun Belt, TSWA and College Sports Madness.
• Rowe is second all-time at MT with eight weekly SBC honors and third in conference history. This is the 34th time a player has received this award during the Rick Insell era.

Blue Raiders vs. Big Ten

• MT is 6-4 all-time against Big Ten opposition. The Blue Raiders are 3-2 all-time against Big 10 foes under Rick Insell.
• MT lost a tough battle, 65-49, at No. 12/14 Penn State on Nov. 13, 2011. The last Big 10 opponent knocked off by the Raiders was Indiana, 65-59, in the 2008 Preseason WNIT on Nov. 22, 2008.

The First Time vs. Opponents

• Middle Tennessee owns a 34-21 record when facing an opponent for the first time under Rick Insell's watch. The Raiders are playing their first opponent ever from Iowa.

Scouting Iowa

• The Hawkeyes are 2-0 after wins over Northern Illinois (63-40) and Illinois State (74-64) in the first two rounds of the WNIT.
• Senior center Morgan Johnson leads UI with 17.5 points and 7.0 rebounds per contest.
• In two games, Iowa is averaging 68.5 points with 42 rebounds per game. From the field, Iowa is shooting 38 percent (42-of-111), while limiting opponents to 32 percent (39-of-124).
• The Hawkeyes have given up just three treys in 23 attempts this season for 13 percent.
• Head Coach Lisa Bluder's team posted a 19-12 overall record in 2011-12. Iowa notched an 11-5 mark in Big 10 action, tying for second in the conference.
• Last season, Iowa lost to California in the first round of the NCAA Tournament, 84-74.
• UI has lost just two non-conference games in the past three seasons at Carver-Hawkeye Arena.

Attendance Starting High

• Support is at all-time high for Middle Tennessee women's basketball. The Blue Raiders are averaging 4,540 fans per game in their first two home games.
• MT set the best attendance mark in the first two rounds of the Preseason WNIT. 5,806 fans packed the house on Nov. 9 against KSU, which ranks as the seventh largest in school history. The Raiders followed up with 3,273 against in-state foe Memphis on Nov. 11.

Dishing It Out

• Assists have been a big benefactor to the MT's success in the first two games. MT has posted 17.5 assists per game.
• Kortni Jones leads the team with 12 of the 35 assists for the Raiders in two games. Jones has dished out 348 in her career. The Oak Ridge native is just 13 shy of reaching MT's top 10 list for career assists.

Preseason All-Sun Belt awards

Middle Tennessee placed three on the first team Preseason All-Sun Belt Teams. Kortni Jones, Icelyn Elie and Ebony Rowe garnered First Team accolades following a vote of the league's head coaches. The honors are the second for Elie and Rowe, while being the first for Jones.

Early Predictions

The Blue Raiders were chosen to finish first in the East Division of the Preseason All-Sun Belt poll, as voted upon by the league's head coaches. Middle Tennessee received 10 of a possible 11 first-place votes and 65 overall points, the most by any team in the league, by the 11 coaches.

Collecting the Honors

Middle Tennessee's basketball programs garnered a total of seven All-Sun Belt Conference honors in the preseason. Only Marist of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) had that many between two programs. St. Joseph's, Baylor, Toledo, Davidson, North Dakota State, and Memphis each had a combined five preseason all-conference selections.

Elie Carries the Blue Raiders to WNIT Semifinals

Senior preseason All-Conference selection Icelyn Elie posted career-bests in a standout victory on

Sunday against Memphis. Elie went 13-of-19 from the field for 30 points and tied a career-best three triples. The Lebanon product grabbed five rebounds, four assists, while notching a block and a steal in 40 minutes. Elie became the first Blue Raider since current Alysha Clark racked up 36 points against Florida Atlantic on Feb. 27, 2010.

Among the Nation's Elite

Middle Tennessee is just one of seven schools that has football, men's and women's basketball teams receiving votes or ranked in ESPN/USA Today Coaches Polls. MT, Notre Dame, Michigan, Louisville, Georgia, Stanford and UCLA are the only programs to boast that accomplishment.

Education Day Set for Dec. 4

MT Athletics and the Murfreesboro City Schools announced last month that the two institutions are partnering together for 'Education Day' on Tuesday, Dec. 4. MT WBB is scheduled to play in-state rival Austin Peay early in an 11 a.m. contest. The early time allows the 12 Murfreesboro City Schools to bring thousands of students to cheer on the Blue Raiders.

Continuing to Rowe

• Junior Ebony Rowe received her 1,000-point club ball on Nov. 9 against KSU and decided she needed to move up the scoring charts.
• The Lexington native scored 23 points and grabbed 11 rebounds in the victory to move to 21st all-time in scoring. Rowe passed Joanne Aluka's mark of 1,090 points. She is just 70 pionts shy of moving into the top-20.
• In 2011-12, Rowe joined Priscilla Robinson as the only Blue Raider to reach 1,000 in her sophomore campaign. Two other players (Alysha Clark and Amber Holt) surpassed 1,000 points in only two seasons, but both transferred into the program and began playing as juniors.
• Rowe became the 26th member and the 10th to play at least one season for head coach Rick Insell.
Doubling History
• Junior Ebony Rowe moved into a tie with Robin Hendrix for fifth all-time in career double-doubles on Nov. 9 against KSU. Rowe is just five shy of reaching the all-time leader in Priscilla Robinson.
• Rowe has 33 double-figure rebounding games and has totaled 63 double-figure scoring contests.

Off the Glass

• With nine offensive rebounds off the offensive glass against KSU, Ebony Rowe moved to third all-time with 338. The junior passed Stephanie Capley's benchmark of 336. The forward set an all-time record with 189 offensive boards last season.
• Now with 341 offensive rebounds, Rowe is five shy of reaching Priscilla Robinson's mark of 346 set in 1991-94.
• Rowe is two rebounds shy of moving into 14th on the career leaders list past Blue Raider Tia Stovall. Rowe has 664 so far in her career.
Experienced Starters
• The five Blue Raider starters have amassed impressive numbers. The group has started a combined 192 games and has reached double-figures in 162 games. Junior Ebony Rowe leads the way with 66 consecutive starts and 63 double-figure scoring games.

Making the Cason

• Murfreesboro's Shanice Cason has been effective at the one slot for the Blue Raiders. The Siegel high product has boasted a team-best nine steals, including tying a career-high six against Kennesaw State. Cason has distributed eight assists in 29.5 minutes per game. She is also averaging nine points and 4.5 rebounds in the first two contests.

Insell Inching Closer to All-Time Mark

• Rick Insell now stands just six victories shy of tying Lewis Bivens for the all-time record.
• Insell joins current Blue Raider men's coach, Kermit Davis, in a race to catch Bivens as the winningest basketball coach in school history. Davis became the winningest men's coach last season, surpassing Jimmy Earle.

Jones Sets New Marks

• Kortni Jones moved up the record books in wins over Kennesaw State and Memphis.
• The senior's seven triples last weekend moved her past Blue Raider great Patrice Holmes for eighth in MT history, giving her 180 total in her career.
• The Oak Ridge native also moved to eighth all-time with 520 three-point attempts. She is five shy of moving into seventh place.
1,000-point Club Watch
• Two Blue Raiders are on the verge of becoming the 27th and 28th members of the MT 1,000-point club.
• Kortni Jones has 885 points and is just 115 away from reaching that plateau.
• Senior Icelyn Elie is 136 points shy, as she has accumulated 864 points in three-plus seasons.

Triple Threat Jones

• Kortni Jones moved up the record books in wins over Kennesaw State and Memphis.
• The senior's seven triples last weekend moved her past Blue Raider great Patrice Holmes for eighth in MT history, giving her 180 total in her career.
• The Oak Ridge native also moved to eighth all-time with 520 three-point attempts. She is five shy of moving into seventh place.

1,000-point Club Watch

• Two Blue Raiders are on the verge of becoming the 27th and 28th members of the MT 1,000-point club.
• Kortni Jones has 885 points and is just 115 away from reaching that plateau.
• Senior Icelyn Elie is 136 points shy, as she has accumulated 864 points in three-plus seasons.

Printed on December 12, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/63996