Blue Raiders host SBC West leader Arkansas State

MT has reeled off 11 consecutive victories

February 5, 2013 · @MTAthletics

Middle Tennessee faces a tough test on Wednesday evening as the Blue Raiders take on SBC West division leader Arkansas State. Tipoff is set for 7 p.m. inside the Murphy Center.

GAME INFORMATION

Matchup: Arkansas State (12-10, 9-4 Sun Belt) at Middle Tennessee (17-5, 12-1 SBC)
Date: Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2013
Time: 7:00 p.m. CT
Location: Murfreesboro, Tenn.
Arena: Murphy Center (11,520)

SERIES INFORMATION

Overall: MT leads series, 17-6
Under Rick Insell: 9-2
In Murfreesboro: MT leads series, 10-0
Last Meeting: MT 70, ASU 70 - Jonesboro, Ark. - Jan. 2, 2013

MEDIA INFORMATION

Radio: WMOT (89.5 FM)/WGNS 1450 AM, 100.5 FM, 101.9 FM
Play-by-Play: Dick Palmer
Color Analyst: Duane Hickey
Live Video - Live Audio - Live Stats

Upcoming Promotions

Wednesday evening's contest against Arkansas State is Faculty & Staff Night. All MT employees can get a discounted ticket with an ID. Sunday, Feb. 10 will be Play4Kay day. The Blue Raiders are

expected to don pink jerseys. The three senior jerseys will be auctioned off after the game. Middle Tennessee Medical Center will be taking donations for breast cancer awareness.

Quick Hitters

• Middle Tennessee (17-5, 12-1 Sun Belt) returns to the Murphy Center for a two-game homestand after picking up a pair of road wins at FIU and Florida Atlantic. Kortni Jones paced the Raiders with 20 points as MT erased a 10 point deficit to defeat FAU, 70-67, last Saturday.
• Wednesday evening's matchup pits the two division leaders in the Sun Belt. Arkansas State has won seven out of their last eight games since falling to the Blue Raiders, 72-70, on Jan. 2.
• MT's 11-game win streak is tied for sixth nationally with Quinnipiac.
• A win on Wednesday evening would give Rick Insell his 100th victory at the Murphy Center.
• Ebony Rowe leads the Raiders with 21.1 points and 11.0 rebounds per game. Kortni Jones and Icelyn Elie are each averaging 14.2 points in 22 games played this season.
• The trio of Elie, Jones and Rowe have each reached double-figures in six consecutive games.
• Rowe has reached double figures for the 30th straight game. Her streak ranks sixth in the NCAA.
• There are four Top 20 NCAA categories in which Rowe ranks. She is 11th in double-doubles (13), 12th in points (21.1), 17th in field goal percentage (54.8) and 20th in rebounds (11.0).

Game Notes

Scouting Arkansas State

• Arkansas State (12-10, 9-4 Sun Belt) has won seven out of their eight last games and holds a game lead in the Sun Belt West division. The Red Wolves dropped a heartbreaking 64-62 decision to North Texas in Jonesboro on Sunday afternoon. ASU had won seven straight since falling in a 72-70 decision to the Raiders on Jan. 2.
• The Red Wolves are averaging the league's second best field goal percentage, knocking down 43 percent of their attempts (499-of-1157). They are scoring an average of 62.1 points per contest, while allowing opponents to tally 59.8 per game. Defensively, Arkansas State is the league leader in three-point defense, giving up 24 percent (82-of-346) in 22 games. ASU is also second in field goal percentage defense, holding opponents to 38 percent (516-of-1345).
• Preseason All-Sun Belt selection Jane Morrill is ASU's lone double-figure scorer with 14.9 points per game. She leads the Red Wolves with 122 made field goals, while shooting at a 51 percent clip (122-of-240). Ashley Olvera is posting nine points a contest with 19 makes from 3-pt range. Hanna Qedan is the league's top free throw shooter at 84.9 percent (45-of-53), while boasting 8.8 points a contest.
• Coach Brian Boyer is in his 14th season at the helm of the Arkansas State program. Since his arrival, the Red Wolves have collected a 223-195 record during that span. Coach Boyer is 5-17 all-time against the Blue Raiders with two of those wins against Rick Insell.

Series with the Red Wolves

• Middle Tennessee and Arkansas State meet for the 24th time on Wednesday with the Raiders holding a decisive 17-6 lead.
• MT has never lost to ASU at the friendly confines of the Murphy Center in 10 previous meetings. The last MT loss was a 70-68 defeat to Arkansas State in the Sun Belt Conference Tournament on March 6, 2011. ASU last defeated MT in the regular season, 70-68, on Jan. 14, 2008.

• Earlier this season, Kortni Jones' bucket with 6.1 seconds left lifted the Raiders to a 72-70 win over Arkansas State. Ebony Rowe paced MT with 27 points, while Jones added 20 and Icelyn Elie capped her night with 16 points.
• Coach Rick Insell is 9-2 all-time against ASU.

Raiders Garnering Votes

• For the third straight week, MT earned votes in the USA Today Sports/ESPN Coaches' poll. MT grabbed 18 votes and sits 28th.
• The Raiders earned four votes in the latest AP Top 25 poll released on Monday.

A Winning Combination

• The Middle Tennessee men's and women's basketball programs have combined for 37 wins this season, tying with Louisville and Syracuse for fourth nationally.
• Duke and Gonzaga lead the country with both of their men's and women's programs posting a combined 39 victories this season.

Experience Pays Off

• Middle Tennessee's Icelyn Elie, Kortni Jones and Ebony Rowe have all reached double-figures in eight out of the last 11 games, including six straight games.
• Rowe has shot 60 percent or more from the field in five of the last seven games. Meanwhile, Kortni Jones has four or more assists in nine of the last 11 contests. On the boards, Icelyn Elie has registered five or more rebounds in 11 consecutive games.
• The tandem has put together 3,831 points in 9,182 minutes of action in a combined 307 games played.

Continuing to Rise in RPI

• Middle Tennessee's RPI moved up seven spots from last week to No. 41 natinoally.
• There are two other Sun Belt teams with RPIs in the Top 100: WKU (82) and UALR (100).
• MT's conference record RPI is 13th nationally after posting a 12-1 record in league play.

Statistically Streaking

• MT's 10-game win streak is currently tied for the sixth longest streak nationally with Quinnipiac.
• The Blue Raiders have averaged a margin of victory of +16.2 points per game during the last nine games.
• During the Raiders' 11-game win streak, MT has tallied a 41.8 field goal percentage or higher in eight of 11 contests.
• Ebony Rowe has averaged 22.5 points, 11.0 rebounds and shot 60 percent during the streak. Meanwhile, Kortni Jones is posting 15.5 and Icelyn Elie has added 14.8 ppg.

At Home Under Insell

• Middle Tennessee holds a daunting 99-11 record under Coach Rick Insell inside the friendly confines of the Murphy Center.
• MT owns a 66-2 (.971) home conference record inside the Murphy Center under head coach Rick

Insell, who took over the program prior to the 2005-06 campaign.

Scouring the Sun Belt

• Middle Tennessee ranks second in the Sun Belt in five categories: scoring margin (+10), rebounding defense (35.7), assists per game (13.2), turnover margin (+3.55) and assist/turnover ratio (0.8). Junior Ebony Rowe leads the SBC with 5.3 offensive rebounds per game. Rowe is second in points (21.1), rebounds (11.0) and minutes played (39.1). Guard Kortni Jones leads the SBC with 4.6 assists and is second with 2.3 triples made per game. Shanice Cason is third in the league with 2.68 steals each contest.

National Statistical Rankings

• The Raiders are in the top 100 in six categories sa released by the NCAA on Feb. 4. MT is 47th in turnover margin (+3.55), 53rd in scoring margin (+10), 71st in field goal percentage (41.5), 79th in scoring defense (57.3), 84th in scoring offense (67.3) and 88th in steals per game (10.0).
• MT has three players in the top 100. Ebony Rowe ranks 12th with 21.1 points per game, 20th with 11.0 rebounds a contest and tied for 11th with 13 double-doubles. Rowe is 17th in field goal percentage (54.8), while Icelyn Elie is listed 54th (48.9). Kortni Jones ranks 66th with 4.6 assists per game. Shanice Cason ranks 64th with 2.68 steals per game.

Printed on May 23, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/65449