Blue Raiders meet UALR for SBC Championship

MT and Trojans square off on ESPNU at 1 p.m.

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Middle Tennessee's quest for its seventh Sun Belt Championship title culminates Monday afternoon at 1 p.m. when the top-seeded Blue Raiders take on No. 2 seed UALR at the Summit Arena in Hot Springs, Ark. The title game will be broadcast live on ESPNU.

GAME INFORMATION

Matchup: No. 2 UALR (24-7 Sun Belt) vs. No. 1 Middle Tennessee (24-7 SBC)
Date: Monday, March 11, 2013
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Location: Hot Springs, Ark.
Arena: Summit Arena (6,000)

SERIES INFORMATION

Overall: MT leads series, 17-7
Under Rick Insell: 8-6
In Sun Belt Tournament: MT leads series, 2-1
Last Meeting: UALR 51, MT 43 - Feb. 16, 2013 - Little Rock, Ark.

MEDIA INFORMATION

Television: ESPNU/ESPN3
Play-by-Play: Michelle Smith
Analyst: Stephen Howard
Radio: WMOT (89.5 FM)/WGNS 1450 AM, 100.5 FM, 101.9 FM
Play-by-Play: Dick Palmer
Live Video - Live Audio - Live Stats

Quick Hitters...

• Middle Tennessee (24-7) makes its' 10th Sun Belt title game appearance in 11 years after defeating FIU 68-59 in the SBC Semifinals and ULM 59-56 in the SBC Quarterfinals.
• The Blue Raiders own a 6-3 mark in the SBC Championship, falling to UALR in heartbreaking fashion last year, 71-70, in OT. The Trojans' Taylor Ford banked a shot with nine seconds left to win the game. MT had overcome a 22-point deficit in the contest to send it to overtime.
• The Raiders are relying heavily on its' main three threats. Icelyn Elie, Kortni Jones and Ebony Rowe have scored 83 percent of the Raiders points in this tournament, tallying 106 of 127 points.
• In Middle Tennessee's win over FIU, the Raiders overcame a 10-point deficit. It marked the first time MT had come back from a deficit that large to win this season.
• Ebony Rowe (989) is three rebounds away from becoming the school's all-time rebounds leader, surpassing Jennifer McFall. Rowe is already the leader in double-doubles (51) and offensive rebounds (497). Kortni Jones (255) is two triples away from tying Brandi Brown for the school record in career makes.
• For the second consecutive year, Icelyn Elie, Kortni Jones and Ebony Rowe were selected to the All-Sun Belt team. Jones and Rowe garnered first team honors, while Elie was selected as a second team recipient.
• All-America candidate and Naismith Award top 30 finalist Ebony Rowe leads the Raiders with 19.9 points and 11.1 rebounds per game. Kortni Jones follows with 16.5 points and Icelyn Elie with 14.3 ppg in 31 contests.

Championship Time

• Middle Tennessee makes its 10th appearance in 11 years in the Sun Belt Championship game. • The Blue Raiders lost in their last appearance to UALR, 70-71 in overtime, on March 6, 2012. • MT owns a 6-3 mark in the previous nine appearances with four titles coming under Rick Insell.
• The past two MT championship appearances have went to overtime with the Blue Raiders winning 70-68 on March 9, 2010.
• MT defeated UALR 74-54 in the first meeting between these two programs in the title game on March 10, 2009.

Series with the Trojans

• Middle Tennessee and UALR are meeting for the 25th time since the series began in 2001. The Blue Raiders hold a 17-7 edge in the all-time series. UALR has a 3-2 edge in the last five meetings.
• Last season, UALR picked up a 71-70 OT win in the Sun Belt Tournament Championship game to secure the automatic bid.
• Earlier this year, the Raiders bested UALR 65-56 as Ebony Rowe reached a career-high 35 points and 17 rebounds in Murfreesboro.
• The Trojans snatched a 51-43 win over MT in Little Rock, as the Raiders went cold in the second half, shooting just 29.6 percent.
• Monday's meeting is the fourth between these two programs in the SBC Championships. MT owns a 3-1 record vs. UALR in the tourney.
• Rick Insell holds a 8-6 mark against UALR since joining the program in 2005-06.

Experience Pays Off

• Middle Tennessee's Icelyn Elie, Kortni Jones and Ebony Rowe have all reached double-figures in 15 out of the last 20 games.
• Rowe has shot 58 percent during that 20 game stretch. Meanwhile, Kortni Jones has reached 20 or more points in eight out of the last 13 games. On the boards, Icelyn Elie has registered five or more rebounds in 20 consecutive contests.
• The tandem has put together 4,314 points in 10,210 minutes of action in a combined 328 games played.

Nearing a Record

• A win on Monday would guarantee MT its' five consecutive berth to the NCAA Tournament, which would set a new school record. MT has currently reached the tournament four years in a row (2009-12), which is tied with a run that stemmed from 1983 until 1986.

Scoring Machines

• There are three MT players that have notched 1,000 points during their respective careers.
• Ebony Rowe reached 1,000 last season and currently is ninth all-time with 1,687 points.
• Oak Ridge's Kortni Jones hit 1,000 points with her 21 against North Texas (Dec. 27) and ranks 16th with 1,361 points.
• Icelyn Elie became the 28th addition by reaching the 1,000 plateau at Arkansas State on Jan. 2. She has reached 1,266 in her career.

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