

# Miranda's Musings: Preseason comes to a close

## Freshman recaps the past two weeks of camp

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Middle Tennessee freshman Miranda Caballero will recaps the final two weeks of preseason training. The Port Orchard, Wash., product recapped her thoughts, as the Blue Raiders look forward to playing UT Martin in the season opener on Sunday, Aug. 25. Match time is set for 2 p.m. at Skyhawk Field.

### THE SECOND WEEK OF PRESEASON TRAINING

We started off the week with an early 7:00 a.m. practice. Getting up early isn't as bad anymore because we have done it so many times. Usually

it is a struggle for me but it feels good to be up and ready for the school day after a nice long practice. Training has been primarily focused on defending and how we defend in a group. At first, it made me think a lot, but I think I'm starting to get it. Our schedule is basically the same all week; practice, breakfast, class, lunch, class, practice, dinner.

We also watched video this week which was a new experience for me as a college athlete. We never went through videos and picked them apart to see the things we could do better when I was playing club ball. It really gives you a different perspective on what to do when you get back out on the field. You can visualize what is happening a lot easier because you saw it from a different angle on video.

We have our first match Friday and I know everyone is getting pumped. Summer classes just ended so we are all focused on what we have to do for Friday's game. I'm a little nervous for the game but that is normal for me. It will go away once the game actually starts but until then I just have to try and stay busy. For the rest of the week it is just soccer and food, basically. And school starts up next week. It is going to be different having a full schedule of classes as well as a fully populated campus that we have to maneuver through. Soccer will start up and then it will be back to the same routine. I think the full field games are getting better and better each day. We are all meshing well when we play and hopefully that shows in the game Friday. The rest of the week will plan out how it should, I



guess!

## FINAL WEEK OF PRESEASON TRAINING

We started off the weekend with two exhibition matches. Even though we didn't get the results we wanted, we still overcame a lot of obstacles. For the freshmen, our jitters of playing our first college soccer game were finally released. For the upperclassman it was a chance to remember what it is like. As a team, we finally were able to see how we play and react in a real game situation. We took what we could out of the games and we began applying them to practices for the rest of the week. The hardest part about the games, for me, was not seeing my family after the game. The first game was tough but I knew they were there in heart even though, all the way in Washington, they weren't actually there. The next home game was better. It gets easier and easier everyday!

We began the week off strong. We started going to the weight room again and I have to say, I missed it. We started the summer off in there everyday. Even though I am beyond sore again, the weight room is a different kind of fitness than just "soccer fitness" and it is nice to improve in a grand scheme of things. We are continuing to do two-a-days but this week, training got switched up again. We were blessed to have Jamie Gilbert come in to speak with us; one of the speakers for Train to be CLUTCH and it put a different perspective on how we should be playing soccer. He reminded us of the psychological training we must endure along side the physical training. It was an eye opener, especially because he did a really nice job with putting things into a perspective that was easy to relate to instead of just straight information; he made it personable.

The training schedules also switched up a bit. We still had two practices a day but some people were given a break depending on what position you played. We split up one of the trainings a day into functional training where Aston trained us on our personal responsibilities so when we formed into a game, we would have a different view as to what was happening around us. The functional training was nice, especially because it gave some of us a break to refuel and be ready for the night practice.

Overall, preseason has been a lot more than I expected. Coming in, I didn't know what to expect, but now, after pushing through all the sweat and soreness, I know the team is only improving. We are a young team, I think we are always reminded of that, but I think that is just what makes us special. We have more to fight for which shows in our training and will hopefully show when we enter into our first game as members of Conference USA at UT Martin this Sunday.

Preseason has definitely prepared us mentally and physically which in turn will benefit us when we have to get the job done. I'm a little anxious going into the new Conference but I also think we are prepared for what we are going to face up against through out the year. As Jamie Gilbert would say "It's not just the hours of work you put in, but the work you put in the hours." And that work will pay off!

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