

2011 UAB VOLLEYBALL

>> MATCH NOTES

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-- Matches 26 & 27 --

Bartow Arena | Birmingham, Ala.



26

27

UTEP Miners

Saturday, Nov. 5 -- 1pm

Sunday, Nov. 6 -- 12 p.m.

'11 Record: 17-9, 7-6

HC: Ken Murphy

All-Time: UAB leads, 6-2

Last Meeting: UAB 3, UTEP 1 (11/19/10)

>The Blazers used a balanced attack that featured eight players with eight or more kills, led by Michelle Simmons and Ally Slaughter each connecting for 13 a piece in the four-set victory. UAB hit .267 as a team, while holding the Miners to a .058 attacking clip for the afternoon. Alison Woods chipped in with a double-double, 21 assists and 14 digs, while Heather Thomas posted a team-best 16 digs of her own.

UAB HOSTS UTEP FOR WEEKEND SERIES: The UAB volleyball squad will host Conference USA opponent UTEP for a two-match series this weekend, beginning Saturday at 1 p.m. CT, followed by a Sunday showdown at noon CT. Both contests will take place at Bartow Arena.

UAB NOTEBOOK: The Blazers are looking to right the ship against the Miners this weekend after dropping a pair of contests on the road a week ago at SMU and Tulsa. Despite the recent struggles, UAB still ranks third in the league standings, holding the tiebreaker over the Rice Owls. The 18 total victories are the second most in C-USA, trailing only Tulsa's 21 wins.

BLAZERS' LEADERS

Kills: Sam Serley, 231

Hitting Percentage: Sam Serley, .378

Assists: Alison Woods, 521 | Becca Howard, 434

Service Aces: Heather Thomas, 23

Digs: Heather Thomas, 484

Blocks: Sam Serley, 119

ACROSS THE C-USA LEADERBOARD: A number of UAB players are showcased in the C-USA league leaders in a variety of statistical categories. Leading the charge in the back row is libero Heather Thomas, who sports a per set dig average of 5.15, tops in the league. On the season she corralled 484 digs in 94 total sets.

Teammate Sam Serley ranks second in hitting percentage (.378) and third in blocks per set (1.27), while fellow junior Kirsten Gallagher's 1.09 blocks per set average ranks seventh in C-USA.

As a team, the Blazers continue to prove why they are one of the strongest defensive squads in the conference. UAB tops the league in both opponent hitting percentage (.162) and blocks per set (2.73), while sitting fourth in digs per set, with an average of 16.24.

KEEP ON DIGGIN': Senior Heather Thomas is nearing the 2,000-career dig mark. The Madison, Ala. native needs only 16 digs to reach the milestone and would become just the fifth player in C-USA history to accomplish the feat. Here is a list of the C-USA career digs leaders:

C-USA All-Time Digs Leaders

1. Jaci Gonzalez, Houston – 2,451
2. Tracey Lam, Rice – 2,168
3. Sidney Stewart*, SMU – 2,088
4. Trish Ladusaw, Cincinnati – 2,074
5. Jenn Miller, Tulane – 1,987

6. Heather Thomas*, UAB – 1,986

*active

CLOSING IN ON 20: Head coach Kerry Messersmith recently earned her 600th career victory and is closing in on another 20-win season. In her 11th year coaching at the Division I level, Messersmith needs just two

-- BLAZER BURN --

- Head Coach Kerry Messersmith has the highest winning percentage (.643) in program history.
- UAB has finished .500 or better in C-USA play every season since Messersmith took over in '06.
- Blazers produced a 13 match win streak, second longest streak in school history. The 2008 UAB team owns the record with 16 victories in a row.

2011 Schedule/Results

Record: 18-7 (8-5 C-USA)

August (3-0, 0-0)

UAB/Samford Invitational

26	vs. Akron	W, 3-0
	vs. Arkansas State	W, 3-2
27	vs. UNC Asheville	W, 3-0

September (11-2/4-0)

First State Skyhawk Invitational

2	at UT Martin	W, 3-1
	vs. Illinois State	L, 3-2
3	vs. Stephen F. Austin	L, 3-2

Owls Classic

9	vs. Troy	W, 3-0
10	vs. Eastern Kentucky	W, 3-0
	at Kennesaw State	W, 3-0

Creighton Classic

16	vs. McNeese State	W, 3-1
17	vs. Drake	W, 3-0
	at Creighton	W, 3-1
20	at Memphis*	W, 3-0
23	MARSHALL*	W, 3-1
25	EAST CAROLINA*	W, 3-0
30	at Tulane*	W, 3-2

October (4-5/4-5)

2	at Southern Miss*	W, 3-1
7	at UCF*	W, 3-1
8	at UCF*	W, 3-2
14	TULSA*	L, 3-0
16	SMU*	L, 3-0
21	at Houston*	L, 3-1
23	RICE*	W, 3-1
28	at SMU*	L, 3-0
30	at Tulsa*	L, 3-1

November (0-0/0-0)

5	UTEP*	1:00 p.m.
6	UTEP*	12:00 p.m.
11	SOUTHERN MISS*	7:00 p.m.
13	TULANE*	1:00 p.m.
18	at East Carolina*	7:00 p.m.
20	at Marshall*	1:00 p.m.
23	MEMPHIS*	7:00 p.m.

* Conference USA match.

Home matches in BOLD CAPS.

All times local to site and subject to change.

Senior libero **Heather Thomas** has played in every possible set (468) during her career in Green and Gold.

2011:	94/94
2010:	118/118
2009:	124/124
2008:	132/132
Total	468/468

more wins for her 10th season of 20-or-more victories. Earlier this season, she also secured her 21st winning season in 24 years as a collegiate head coach.

MINERS REPORT: UTEP is coming off a weekend split, which included a 3-0 loss to Rice, before knocking off Houston in five sets. The Miners' 7-6 league record is just one game behind the Blazers. UTEP began the 2011 conference season on fire, claiming victories in five of its first six matches.

Defensively, the Miners sport two of the league's top players in Xitali Herrera and Stephanie Figueroa. Herrera, a middle blocker, averages 1.23 blocks per set, while Figueroa, a two-time C-USA Defensive Player of the Week, posts 4.65 digs per set as a libero.

Figueroa has captured the C-USA Defensive Player of the Week award on two occasions this season.

MINERS' LEADERS

Kills: Xitali Herrera, 311
Hitting Percentage: Xitali Herrera, .337
Assists: Malia Patterson, 993
Service Aces: Stephanie Figueroa, 40
Digs: Stephanie Figueroa, 451
Blocks: Xitali Herrera, 119

MESSERSMITH MILESTONE: Head coach Kerry Messersmith earned her 600th career coaching victory with a 3-1 victory over the Rice Owls on Oct. 23. Messersmith is 600-322 overall and 126-70 in her sixth season guiding the Blazers.

SERLEY EARNS C-USA HONORS - Oct. 10: Sam Serley was named C-USA Offensive Player of the Week on Monday after a strong week in the front line for the Blazers. The Nashville, Tenn. native hit a team and league-best .558 for the week while leading UAB to a pair of victories at UCF. She averaged 3.67 kills and 1.67 blocks per set and connected for a season-high 20 kills in a thrilling five-set victory last Saturday.

It marked the fourth weekly conference award captured by a UAB volleyball player in 2011, the first on offense. Teammates Heather Thomas, Kirsten Gallagher and Kiriana Hirini each earned consecutive defensive honors from the league earlier in the year.

HIRINI BLOCKS WAY TO DEFENSIVE AWARD - Oct. 3: Kiriana Hirini was a major factor off the bench for the Blazers at the middle blocker position, as the Tauranga, New Zealand native averaged an impressive 2.60 blocks per set for the weekend.

Two days after posting five blocks, two solo, in a five-set victory at Tulane, Hirini made even more of an impact on the road at Southern Miss. In Hattiesburg, the redshirt-freshman recorded six of her career-high eight blocks in the third frame of the match that helped propel the Blazers to victory.

Of the eight blocks tallied, three were solos, which she totaled in just two sets of game action. For the weekend, Hirini produced five solo blocks, compared to only two solo blocks by the Golden Eagles and Green Wave combined.

GALLAGHER NAMED C-USA TOP DEFENDER - Sept. 26:

Gallagher was a presence at the net as UAB posted a 3-0 record in the first week of conference play. The Blazers are now 13-2 overall, thanks in large part to Gallagher's ability to stonewall opponent's attacks. The Auburn, Ala. native averaged 1.90 blocks per set, as she posted match highs in that statistic in each victory against Memphis, Marshall and East Carolina.

In the sweep of the Tigers, Gallagher recorded three solo blocks and three block assists, before tallying nine and four total blocks versus the Herd and Pirates, respectively. She posted as many solo blocks (6) for the week as the three conference opponents did combined.

As a team, the Blazers averaged a league-best 3.50 blocks per set, compared to just a 1.60 average by league foes. Gallagher guided the Blazers' defense to hold opponents to a .089 attacking percentage during the week, tops in the conference.

Double-Double Dip: UAB has recorded 35 double-double performances in 2011, led by Kate Morrell with 11. Others that have completed the stat line include: Alison Woods (9), Ally Slaughter (7), Becca Howard (6) and Sam Serley (2).

THOMAS EARNS C-USA WEEKLY HONOR - Sept. 19:

Senior Heather Thomas was named C-USA Defensive Player of the Week on Monday (Sept. 19), the first weekly award of her career. Thomas averaged 6.73 digs per set as the Blazers defense held opponents to an attacking clip of just .128 over a perfect 3-0 weekend for the Blazers. The Blazers knocked off Creighton, Drake and McNeese State to close out non-conference play with a 10-2 record, the best start to a season through 12 matches since 2005.

The Madison, Ala. native recorded match highs in each contest for UAB as Thomas corralled 24-or-more digs versus each weekend opponent and upped her season digs average to 5.47 per set. She added five service aces, two extremely important ones against McNeese State on Friday afternoon. With the score knotted at 25 in the fourth set, Thomas stepped to the line and calmly laced back-to-back aces to claim the victory and avoid a deciding set with the Cowgirls.

The Messersmith File

Career Record..... 600-322 (24th season)
NCAA347-209 (16th season)
Division I 242-122 (10th season)

Head Coaching Experience

2006-Present UAB (126-70)
2001-05 Ga. Southern (116-52)
1997-00 Arizona Western CC (129-65)
1994-95 Chadron State (46-29)
1991-93 Pittsburg State (59-58)
1989-90 Fort Scott CC (63-25)
1987-88 Allen County CC (61-23)

NCAA Tournament Appearances

2008 NCAA Second Round(UAB)
2006 NCAA First Round(UAB)
2003 NCAA First Round(Ga. Southern)
2001 NCAA First Round(Ga. Southern)

Education

Bachelor's: Chadron State (1986)

Inside the Numbers

.643

Winning percentage in six years at UAB, the highest for a coach in program history

600

Career Victories

126

Wins in six years at UAB (compared to 112 in the 10 years before her arrival)

20

Winning seasons in 23 years as a head coach

8

20-win seasons in 10 years at the NCAA Division I level

4

NCAA tournament appearances, including the only two in UAB program history and two at Georgia Southern.

3

Appearances in the C-USA Championship finals in her first four years (tournament no longer exists)

Career Attack Percentage

1. Tammy Robertson (89-92)	.389
2. Casey Dent (05-08)	.333
3. Sam Serley (09-P)	.331
4. Danielle Reaves (88-91)	.308
5. Lilly Domingos (07-08)	.305
6. Melissa Cobb (88-91)	.279
7. Hilary Beck (88-92)	.275
8. Tonya Larson (94-97)	.259
9. Kirsten Gallagher (08-P)	.255
10. Shondra Bonovitch (84-87)	.243

Career Digs

1. Heather Thomas (08-P)	1,984
2. Danielle Reaves (88-91)	1,651
3. Brianna Galvin (05-07)	1,650

Career Block Solos

1. Julie Myers (86-89)	139
2. Hilary Beck (88-92)	136
3. Hailey Isham (95-98)	124
4. Shondra Bonovich (84-87)	108
5. Jennifer Johnson (86-88)	103
6. Terri Steeb (95-98)	100
7. Sam Serley (09-P)	85
8. Toni Herron (91-94)	81
9. Michele Moses (83-85)	80
10. Karen Boyd (00-03)	53
Ginny Alexander (83-85)	53

Career Total Blocks

1. Hilary Beck (88-92)	547
2. Hailey Isham (95-98)	535
3. Terri Steeb (95-98)	452
4. Julie Myers (86-89)	388
5. Shondra Bonovitch (84-87)	356
6. Toni Herron (91-94)	352
7. Shaniqua Cooper (04-07)	347
8. Sam Serley (09-P)	344
9. Wendy Huber (90-93)	336
10. Karen Boyd (00-03)	327

Career Assists

1. Tammy Robertson (89-92)	6,650
2. Nevena Stefanov (05-08)	5,839
3. Abby Thatcher (95-98)	4,872
4. Jill Gilmour (87-88)	2,948
5. Heather Dillard (93-94)	2,785
6. Alison Woods (09-P)	2,645
7. Patti Schroder (85-86)	2,480
8. Bree Barnard (92-95)	2,375
9. Heather Dempsey (97-00)	2,284
10. Kim Arnold (91-95)	2,220

Single Season Digs

1. Heather Thomas (2010)	607
2. Brianna Galvin (2006)	592
3. Heather Thomas (2009)	586
4. Brianna Galvin (2007)	518
5. Heather Thomas (2011)	484

Career Digs Average - Conference USA

1. Ellen Hayes (03-04) DEP	6.68
2. Tracey Lam (07-10) RICE	5.22
3. Jaci Gonzalez (02-05) HOU	5.18
4. Talaya Whitfield (03-04) TCU	5.09
5. Sidney Stewart (08-P) SMU	5.01
6. Jessica Adams (09-P) TLS	4.94
7. Candice Davis (06-07) SMU	4.91
8. Jannette Evanco (05-06) SMU	4.89
9. Jenn Miller (06-09) TLN	4.57
10. Trish Ladusaw (99-02) CIN	4.38
Heather Thomas (08-P) UAB	4.24

ROAD WARRIORS: The Blazers started the season with 13 matches on the road before playing home at Bartow Arena. The away slate includes four tournaments and the team's Conference USA opener at Memphis. UAB was the last team in the conference to play a home contest. The Green and Gold played 17 of its first 19 matches away.

SERLEY NAMED TO PRESEASON ALL-C-USA TEAM:

Sam Serley was named to the Preseason All-Conference USA Team voted on by the head coaches across the league. Serley put forth an excellent season last year, averaging 2.88 kills and 1.04 blocks per set. She also hit at a .318 clip en route to being named AVCA Honorable Mention All-American and second team all-conference.

Double-Double List

Name	Season/Career
Kate Morrell	11/13
10.23 vs. Rice*	16k-13d
10.21 at Houston*	13k-10d
10.8 at UCF*	17k-18d
10.7 at UCF*	14k-15d
10.2 at Southern Miss*	14k-11d
9.30 at Tulane*	13k-14d
9.23 vs. Marshall*	10k-14d
9.17 at Creighton	11k-16d
9.16 vs. McNeese State	13k-12d
9.9 vs. Troy	11k-10d
8.26 vs. Arkansas State	11k-15d
Alison Woods	9/30
10.7 at UCF*	27a-13d
10.2 at Southern Miss*	21a-18d
9.30 at Tulane*	30a-10d
9.23 vs. Marshall*	24a-11d
9.17 at Creighton	22a-15d
9.17 vs. Drake	19a-10d
9.3 vs. Stephen F. Austin	28a-14d
9.2 vs. Illinois State	25a-15d
8.26 vs. Arkansas State	20a-12d
Ally Slaughter	7/9
10.30 at Tulsa*	10k-10d
10.23 vs. Rice*	11k-15d
9.30 at Tulane*	10k-13d
9.23 vs. Marshall*	12k-21d
9.3 vs. Stephen F. Austin	13k-11d
9.2 vs. Illinois State	15k-10d
8.26 vs. Arkansas State	13k-11d
Becca Howard	6/8
10.23 vs. Rice*	22a-11d
10.16 vs. SMU*	11a-10d
10.2 at Southern Miss*	14a-11d
9.30 at Tulane*	19a-12d
9.3 vs. Stephen F. Austin	25a-10d
9.2 vs. Illinois State	23a-10d
Sam Serley	2/2
9.10 vs. Eastern Kentucky	10k-10b
9.2 vs. Illinois State	15k-10b

C-USA POTW

Date	Player
Offensive	
A29	Altrese Hawkins, Memphis, OH
S5	Angelica Crump, UCF, OH
S12	Tyler Henderson, Tulsa, OH
S19	Tyler Henderson, OH
S26	Katie Norris, Houston, OH
O3	Jessica Oliver, SMU, OH
O10	Sam Serley, UAB, MB
O17	Angelica Crump, UCF, OH
O24	Ashley Mell, Southern Miss, OH
O31	Abby Tomas, Marshall, OH
N7	
N14	
N21	
N28	
Defensive	
A29	Stephanie Figueroa, UTEP, L
S5	Megan White, Rice, DS
S12	Stephanie Figueroa, UTEP, L
S19	Heather Thomas, UAB, L
S26	Kirsten Gallagher, UAB, MB
O3	Kiriana Hirini, UAB, MB
O10	Courtney Manning, SMU, MB
O17	Lisa Knecht, Southern Miss, L
O24	Lisa Knecht, Southern Miss, L
O31	Jessica Adams, Tulsa, L
N7	
N14	
N21	
N28	
Setter	
A29	Hajnalk Molnar, Memphis, S
S5	Rachel Vukson, UCF, S
S12	Rachel Vukson, UCF, S
S19	Hajnalk Molnar, Memphis, S
S26	Caitlin Ogletree, Houston, S
O3	Hajnalk Molnar, Memphis, S
O10	Caitlin Ogletree, Houston, S
O17	Caitlin Ogletree, Houston, S
O24	Kelsea Seymour, Southern Miss, S
O31	Rachel Vukson, UCF, S
N7	
N14	
N21	
N28	