



For Immediate Release

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Softball Announces 2007 Spring Schedule

Six NCAA Tournament teams highlight schedule

MEMPHIS — University of Memphis softball head coach Windy Thees announced the team's 2007 schedule today, which includes six teams from the 2006 NCAA tournament field and four that ended the season ranked in the top 25.

Memphis will begin the season at a three-day tournament hosted by No. 10 LSU on February 9-11 and will follow it with a two-day tournament hosted by No. 19 Florida State that also includes No. 22 Kansas on February 16-17. Later in the season the Lady Tigers will travel to Knoxville to take on No. 4 Tennessee on April 10. The Lady Vols came a game short from playing in the 2006 NCAA College World Series Championship.

"I'm excited for this season," Thees said. "We have the opportunity to play in some top 20 teams' tournaments. I think with the experience our girls received last year, this is going to be the next step for us; to play some more challenging competition early on and see where we need to improve."

Memphis will open its home schedule on February 14 against Alcorn State. The game will take place in the Lady Tigers' new stadium set to be completed in early November at the Park Avenue Campus, a few blocks from the school's main campus. Last year Memphis played its home games at Greenbrook Park in Southaven, Miss., and the team will continue practicing at the complex in the fall as the new stadium is completed.

"The girls have sacrificed so much for it," Thees said. "They took a chance to come out to a program that's brand new. They've traveled to Southaven everyday for practices and games for the past year and a half. To be able to finally play at our home, just a few blocks from campus where the community, students and professors on campus can come out, is huge."

The Lady Tigers will also host the second-annual Memphis Lady Tiger Classic on February 23-25. The three-day tournament will include Arkansas-Pine Bluff, SEMO, Evansville, Central Arkansas and Mississippi Valley State, a 2006 NCAA Tournament team. Memphis will also travel to play in a March tournament hosted by the University of San Diego.

UTEP will host the Tigers on March 17-18 in El Paso, Texas, to open up the Conference USA schedule. Memphis will host 2006 NCAA Tournament participant and last year's conference champion, Tulsa, as well as Houston, UAB and UCF and will travel to compete against UTEP, Southern Miss, East Carolina and Marshall in C-USA action. The Lady Tigers finished its inaugural season seventh in C-USA with a 28-26 overall record and 10-13 in the conference.

"I think our conference is going to be very tough this year," Thees said. "We now have a feel for everybody and where they are at. We're a very strong conference and a very balanced conference. I think the difference between the best team and the worst team isn't very big. It's just who can peak at the right times and who can play consistent softball."

"That's what we are really going to strive for this year now that we have a little bit more experience," Thees continued. "We're going to aim at getting that consistency this year so we can play at a higher level every time we step on the field."

Memphis began fall practices last week and will play in a fall tournament hosted by Tennessee in Knoxville this Saturday and Sunday. The Lady Tigers will play 2006 NCAA Tournament participants Tennessee Tech and Tennessee as well as Milligan College and Lee University.

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