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Lady Buffs ready for AAC softball tourney

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Pitcher Sidney Burns likes the chemistry of this Milligan College softball team as well as any she's been a part of.

Whether that translates into a third conference championship in four years will be determined this week.

The Lady Buffs are the No. 3 seed for the Appalachian Athletic Conference tournament that begins today at Donatar Park in Kingsport. They face No. 6 Union in a first-



Sidney Burns

round game at 3 o'clock.

For Burns, the end of a sparkling career is at hand. The senior from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., has won 72 games in her four seasons, with a school-record 748 strikeouts in 699 innings. Her ERA over that span: a miniscule 1.18.

Burns was named AAC pitcher of the year as a freshman, when she threw a whopping 249 innings and was 26-10, and again as a sophomore. It's no coincidence

that Milligan won the championship both of those years.

"My goal this year is to just go out with a bang," she said Monday, "and that means win another championship. I want to pull through for my teammates, not let them down. If I pitch well, everything falls into place for the team."

It's been a fairly pedestrian season by the Lady Buffs' standards. They finished 9-5 in the conference, 28-17 overall.

"Our team has the greatest chemistry in all my years at Milligan. It's been awesome," said Burns. "On the field, it's been slightly frustrating. We've been up and

down, both with us. We've split with them close, but not played.

"From a pitcher's perspective, you can't mess up."

When it comes to the coach Wes Holly, it's a different story this week.

Besides Burns, Milligan's ERA this season, emerging talent Maryville is 12-6

The team ERA is 1.18.