

April 20, 2002

Middle Tennessee Survives Marathon Match

MT Media Relations

MOBILE, Ala. - **Tanja Buchheim** prevailed 7-5 in the third set in a three-plus hour match to give the 61st-ranked Middle Tennessee Lady Raiders a 4-3 victory Saturday in the Sun Belt Championships at the Mobile Tennis Center.

Saturday's match took more than five hours to complete after the Lady Raiders (13-9) played for more than four hours Friday against Arkansas State. Senior **Michaela Gridling** was taken to the hospital after her singles match, suffering from dehydration.

The junior Buchheim won the opening set of her match, 6-3, over Montserrat Flores, but Flores came back to win a tiebreaker for the second set. The two were the only ones left on the court in the third set, and continued to battle back-and-forth, with the match tied at four all when Flores began cramping.

Flores battled through the cramps but eventually succumbed to Buchheim, 7-5, in the final set, giving the Lady Raiders the 4-3 victory.

Middle Tennessee started the match unlucky by dropping the doubles point in a tiebreaker.

Jennifer Klaschka and **Carien Venter** won 8-3 at No. 3 doubles over Alejandra Lopez and Vanessa Nieto, but Gridling and **Emily Vest** dropped a 9-7 decision to Flores and Cecilia Poveda. At No. 1, 12th-ranked **Stacy Varnell** and **Manon Kruse** lost to Maria Julieta Lillo and Layla Tohme, 9-8 (4), dropping the doubles point for the second straight day.

But the Lady Raiders started the singles with a bang, winning the opening set in four of the six matches.

Venter rolled to a 6-1, 6-3 win at No. 5 over Lopez, and Klaschka also won easily, 6-2, 6-1, at No. 2 over Tohme. Vest lost at No. 6 and Gridling dropped her match in straight sets, but the 33rd-ranked Kruse tied the match at three with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over Lillo at No. 1, leaving the match to Buchheim, who delivered in the clutch.

The Lady Raiders take on New Mexico State at 9 a.m. Sunday in the fifth-place match of the tournament at the Mobile Tennis Center.

#61 MIDDLE TENNESSEE 4, ARKANSAS-LITTLE ROCK 3

SINGLES

(33) **Manon Kruse** (MT) def. Maria Julieta Lillo (UALR), 6-2, 6-3

Jennifer Klaschka (MT) def. Layla Tohme (UALR), 6-2, 6-1

Cecilia Poveda (UALR) def. **Michaela Gridling** (MT), 6-3, 6-1

Tanja Buchheim (MT) def. Montserrat Flores (UALR), 6-3, 6-7 (5), 7-5

Carien Venter (MT) def. Alejandra Lopez (UALR), 6-1, 6-3

Carmen Torres (UALR) def. **Emily Vest** (MT), 6-0, 6-0

DOUBLES

1. Lillo-Tohme (UALR) def. (12) Kruse-Varnell (MT), 9-8 (4)

2. Flores-Poveda (UALR) def. Vest-Gridling (MT), 9-7

3. Klaschka-Venter (MT) def. Vanessa Nieto-Lopez (UALR), 8-3

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