

Klemetz Takes National Title

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee's 10th-ranked and seventh-seeded Daniel Klemetz defeated fourth-seeded and sixth-ranked Amer Delic of Illinois, 7-5, 6-3, Sunday morning to win the 2002 Icy Hot/ITA All-American Championships at the Champions Club in Chattanooga, Tenn., the first leg of the collegiate grand slam. Klemetz improved his record to 11-2 this year, 10-2 versus ranked opponents in winning six straight matches to take the title. The senior is the first Blue Raider singles player



to win a national title, and he will also be the first Middle Tennessee player to be ranked No.1 in the country. Former Blue Raider Fred Niemeyer lost in the final at the 1997 Omni Hotels/ITA National Indoor Championships. Klemetz, a senior from Vanersborg, Sweden, beat three players from the top-20 of the Omni Hotels national singles rankings en route to the title. In the one hour, 52 minute final, Klemetz broke Delic's big serve at three critical times, in the final game of the first set and then twice in the second set to go up 4-2 and 5-3. Delic still managed seven aces in the match. Klemetz, who made two national quarterfinals last season, was honored in August in New York as the winner of the ITA/Arthur Ashe Award for Leadership and Sportsmanship. "I've been on the court for 13-14 hours over the last few days, and I thought I would feel it more than I did," Klemetz said. "I took IV fluids yesterday and I think that really helped. I felt great today. All the conditioning I've done has really helped. I played four three-setters in two days at the last tournament and that really prepared me for this weekend. This is something I will carry with me, playing that many matches in so few days and getting through it. "I would say I played really solid today. Both of us started a little shaky, a little nervous I think. We both held serve until 6-5 in the first set and I broke him to take the set. I returned really well the whole match. He's a big serve-and-volleyer, so returning was very important. I was holding serve pretty easily, so I felt like any time I can turn the match my way if I could break him. Then at the end, the last four games were a battle. It was great to serve it out when it really counted because I've had a problem with that in the past." Middle Tennessee's David McNamara and Julius Robberts won the doubles title at the '97 Icy Hot/ITA All-American in Austin, Texas. McNamara, now an assistant coach at MTSU, was with Klemetz this week in Chattanooga. "This is a great honor for Dan and for our program," Middle Tennessee head coach Dale Short said. "Anytime you beat six ranked opponents in a row is tremendous, but to do it over the three or four day period in a national championship tournament is remarkable." Klemetz will be the top seed at the National

Indoor Championships in Dallas, Texas, November 7-10.

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