

May 7, 2009

## Blue Raiders ready for NCAA Championships Team set for tourney after winnig first SBC Championships title

MT Athletic Communications



Middle Tennessee earned the automatic bid for the Sun Belt conference after winning its first conference tournament since joining the league in 2001. ( )

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**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** - After completing their finals on Wednesday the Blue Raiders turned all of their attention to the first round of the NCAA Championships where they will face Boise State on Friday, May 8.

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The Blue Raiders earned the automatic bid for the Sun Belt conference after winning three straight matches at the Sun Belt Championships.

It was the first time since 2005 the Blue Raiders won the conference tournament. The Blue Raiders have won the league in 2005 and now in 2009.

Middle Tennessee last competed in the tournament after receiving an at-large bid as a team in 2006 after posting a 16-7 record during the regular season. This marks Middle Tennessee's sixth NCAA Tournament appearance in the last 10 years and eighth appearance overall.

The Blue Raiders will look to change their luck in the first round of the NAAs when they face Boise State Friday, as former teams have lost their last two first round matches.

"I am very excited about the match with Boise State, in sports all you ask for are opportunities and my team has gotten a great opportunity. Opportunities are rare in sports. When you are given them you must take advantage," head coach David McNamara said.

Senior **Robert McKenzie** and sophomore **John Peers**, who will compete in the NCAA Individual Championships later this month, will help guide Middle Tennessee against Boise State.

McKenzie and Peers have each only lost one dual match in singles this season and are ranked 34th in doubles.

The Blue Raiders are 2-2 all-time against the Broncos. If the Blue Raiders win they will meet the winner of the Furman/Alabama match on May 9.

"Now that the team is done with finals they can concentrate on Friday's match. It has been a tough week because they have been very stressed out with exams. I have to give my guys credit for taking care of business in the classroom. I have four players who have challenged themselves to make a 4.0," head coach David McNamara said. "I believe we match up well with Boise State am looking forward to Friday afternoon."

Anyone who is interested in driving to Tuscaloosa, Ala., to watch the Blue Raiders compete in the NCAA tournament should contact assistant coach Ash Tucker at (615) 796-9876. Tickets for the tournament are \$5 per adult and \$3 per youth and are general admission.

The Blue Raiders will face off with Boise State at 2 p.m. on Friday, May 8 at Tennis Stadium on the campus of the University of Alabama. Results from the match will be posted on

goblueraiders.com as soon as they are available.

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