

February 10, 2010

Araya earns Sun Belt Athlete of the Week honor

Senior completes 6-0 week, including singles and doubles

Athletic Communications

NEW ORLEANS - Middle Tennessee senior women's tennis player [Natalie Araya](#) has been selected as the February 10 Sun Belt Athlete of the Week it was announced by the league office Wednesday.

Araya's honor is the first of her career and the third for the Blue Raiders under head coach Alison Ojeda. The last time a Middle Tennessee women's tennis player garnered the accolade was February 14, 2006, during Ojeda's first season.

The Mississauga, Ontario, native posted a perfect 6-0 record last week in guiding MT to a 3-0 start, best in the Sun Belt-to-date.

She won each of her three singles matches in straight sets, garnering three wins in four days for the Blue Raiders. Playing at the No. 2 position, she defeated Belmont's Catherine Holliday 6-3, 6-1, then handed Chattanooga's Emily Hangstefer a 6-0, 7-5 loss. Her singles play was concluded with a 6-3, 6-1 victory over UT-Martin's Johanie Van Zyl.

In doubles action, Araya paired with [Marietta Bigus](#) during all three matches at the No. 1 tandem. The duo earned an 8-3 triumph over Belmont's Abby Leatherwood and Laura Stack and then matched the score in a win against Chattanooga's Hangstefer and Jenna Nurik. The Blue Raiders' top pairing then wrapped up the week with a hard fought, 8-6 victory over UT-Martin's Belisa de Brito and Martie Wahl.



Senior Natalie Araya is the Feb. 10 Sun Belt Athlete of the Week. ()

Araya also was tabbed the BlueRaiders.com Athlete of the Week by the *Daily News Journal* for her efforts last week.

She will join her Middle Tennessee teammates at their next match, a 6:45 p.m. start, Friday, February 19, in Jonesboro, Ark., in the Sun Belt opener against Arkansas State.

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