Born-Siljestrom Take Title at All-American

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee's 10th-ranked doubles team of Andreas Siljestrom and Marco Born won the final five games, defeating a duo from North Carolina in the finals of the Polo Ralph Lauren ITA All-American Championships at the Case Tennis Center in Tulsa, Okla.

- **Video:** Head Coach Dale Short with Born and Siljestrom (WMV)

Born-Siljestrom defeated UNC's 51st-ranked Raian Luchici and Brad Pomeroy, 8-3, in the finals, capping a terrific week of play for the 6-foot, 9-inch towers. The Blue Raider tandem did not lose a service game in their five matches, beating four ranked opponents along the way to the school's third All-American title and second in doubles.

The duo joins former All-Americans Daniel Klemetz (singles - 2002) and David McNamara-Julius Robberts (doubles - 1997) as winners of the first leg in the collegiate grand slam, a feat not lost on the players.

"We set this as a goal after we lost at last year's NCAA Tournament," Born said after the victory. "We served much better than we have [in the two previous fall tournaments] and the work we put in before the tournament really paid off."

The match was a slugfest in the early-going, with the first six games taking more than 40 minutes, but neither side able to break the other. Middle Tennessee's breakthrough came in the seventh game, breaking the UNC duo and never looking back. The rest wasn't easy, according to head coach Dale Short, but the guys came through in the clutch.

"It was really an incredible win with a fantastic setting," Short said. "The guys were nervous as a wreck, but came through when it counted on the big points.

"They were able to convert the break points in this match, where normally, and throughout much of the tournament, they would get away. They really played extremely well."

Short said the turning point came after the break at 3-all, giving his tandem what it needed to move Middle Tennessee to 3-0 in All-American finals.

"We didn't serve great, but well enough. The break really gave us the momentum and energy. It was really nip-and-tuck through the first six games and even at the end, when the guys got a little tight."

The entire Blue Raider squad will now prepare for the ITA Southeast Championships, October 13-16, in Memphis, Tenn. Full results and information from the All-American Championships may be found at itatennis.com.

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