Blue Raiders preparing for SBC Championships

Will face UL-Lafayette in first round

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee men's tennis team will be the No. 5 seed when the Sun Belt Championships begin in New Orleans on Thursday, April 22. The Blue Raiders will face UL-Lafayette in the first round of the tournament on Thursday, April 22 at 11:30 a.m. The two teams faced earlier in the season at the Sun Belt Shootout with the Ragin' Cajuns taking a 4-3 win. "We lost to ULL a few weeks ago without Victor in the lineup and I think this time the outcome will be different providing we are healthy and play well. Individually, we are playing our very best right now and if we continue that at the tournament we are in very good shape to get wins," head coach David McNamara said. The Blue Raiders 7-19 overall will be looking to repeat as Sun Belt Champions after battling injuries most of the season. Middle Tennessee has played one of the toughest schedules in the country this season facing 14 nationally ranked opponents. Junior John Peers has been the prevailing force this season. Peers is currently ranked 34th in the ITA Poll and is 17-4 in dual matches, winning six of his last eight. The Melbourne, Australia native has paired with junior Kyle Wishing most of the season. The duo is 8-6 overall and has won seven of their last 10. Junior Victor Melo has been on the bench the past three weeks with an injury and should be back in the line-up for the tournament. Sophomore Richard Cowden has also been hampered by injuries the past few weeks playing doubles but unable to finish his singles matches. Freshman Shaun Waters has been a stable player for the Blue Raiders the past few weeks winning his singles matches when needed and senior Alex McCann has done the same as his singles win against Memphis clinched the win for Middle Tennessee. Denver, the one seed, has a bye for the first round and will face the winner of Middle Tennessee vs. UL-Lafayette in the semi-finals. On the other side of the bracket, Troy will play Western Kentucky and Florida Atlantic will face tournament host New Orleans in the first round. "Denver is the team to beat. They are ranked 30th in the country and if we get through ULL I look forward to getting a shot at them in the semifinals," McNamara said. "The key to winning for us will

be all six positions stepping up and playing their best. If that is the case then we have a good shot at winning the tournament. If one or two players do not show-up or play their best then we are capable of losing in the first round." Results from the Sun Belt Championships will be posted on goblueraiders.com as soon as they become available.

Tournament Seeds

1. Denver
2. Troy
3. Florida Atlantic
4. Louisiana-Lafayette
5. Middle Tennessee
6. New Orleans
7. WKU

Tournament Schedule

THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010

11:30 AM M1 No. 2 Troy vs. No. 7 WKU
11:30 AM M2 No. 3 Florida Atlantic vs. No. 6 New Orleans
11:30 AM M3 No. 4 Louisiana-Lafayette vs. No. 5 Middle Tennessee

FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2010

4:00 PM M4 Match 1 Winner vs. Match 2 Winner
4:00 PM M5 No. 1 Denver vs. Match 3 Winner

SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 2010

CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH

10:00 AM M6 Match 4 Winner vs. Match 5 Winner

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