

Blue Raiders Drop Tough 4-3 Decision

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee's 39th-ranked men's tennis team lost the doubles point but won three of four singles matches to take the lead before dropping the final two singles outings, falling to 29th-ranked Georgia Tech Sunday at the Bill Moore Tennis Center in Atlanta, Ga. The Blue Raiders (3-2) lost the doubles point for the second straight match but rallied with singles wins at Nos. 2, 3 and 4 to take a 3-2 lead in the match. But Rishan Kuruppu and Morgan Richard both lost in straight sets at Nos. 5 and 6, sending Middle Tennessee to its second loss of the season and third

straight against the Yellowjackets in Atlanta. For the second time in as many days, senior Brandon Allan and junior Kai Schledorn played the deciding match in doubles. Juniors Andreas Siljestrom and Marco Born, ranked third in the country in doubles, defeated 22nd-ranked Marko Rajevac and David North, 8-5, at No. 1. Kuruppu and Greg Pollack, both seniors, dropped an 8-6 decision to Jordan Delass and George Gvelesiani, leaving the point up to Allan-Schledorn. The Middle Tennessee duo lost another heart-breaker, this time falling to Georgia Tech's Zachary Rath and Scott Blackmon, 9-8 (5), giving the Ramblin' Wreck an early 1-0 edge in the match. But the Blue Raiders responded again in singles, winning three of the first four completed matches and losing the other in a third-set tiebreaker. Schledorn defeated North at No. 3, 6-4, 6-3, before 97th-ranked Born dropped a 6-2, 5-7, 6-7 (6), decision to Rajevac at No. 1. Siljestrom won 7-6 (6), 7-5, at No. 2 over Rath, and Allan prevailed at No. 4 over Delass, 6-4, 7-5, giving Middle Tennessee a 3-2 lead as the final two matches went on the court. Richard, a freshman and undefeated heading into Sunday, picked up his first loss with a 6-7 (1), 3-6, decision to Blackmon at No. 5. Kuruppu lost the deciding match, 5-7, 4-6, to Gvelesiani at No. 5. "I thought we really competed much better than at Virginia Tech last weekend when we lost," head coach Dale Short said. "One point here or there and we win that match 5-2. It's really tough with Marco losing in a tiebreaker and then we were playing well at 5 and 6 and lost both of those." Short added that the doubles pairings is something that will have to be addressed because of the results this weekend. "We have to get our doubles squared away. That's what really cost us was the doubles point," he said. "Our doubles should be better than what we're doing right now, and we'll have to look at that because we're not playing up to our potential right

now." Middle Tennessee will take the next few days off because the team does not play again until hosting Rice and Minnesota, February 25-26, at the Racquet Club of Murfreesboro. **#29 Georgia**

Tech 4, #35 Middle Tennessee 3

SINGLES

1. Marko Rajevac (GT) def. (97) Marco Born (MT), 2-6, 7-5, 7-6 (6)
2. (48) Andreas Siljestrom (MT) def. Zachary Rath (GT), 7-6 (6), 7-5
3. Kai Schledorn (MT) def. David North (GT), 6-4, 6-3
4. Brandon Allan (MT) def. Jordan Delass (GT), 6-4, 7-5
5. George Gvelesiani (GT) def. Rishan Kuruppu (MT), 7-5, 6-4
6. Scott Blackmon (GT) def. Morgan Richard (MT), 7-6 (1), 6-3

DOUBLES

1. (3) Siljestrom-Born (MT) def. (22) Rajevac-North (GT), 8-5
 2. Blackmon-Rath (GT) def. Allan-Schledorn (MT), 9-8 (5)
 3. Delass-Gvelesiani (GT) def. Kuruppu-Greg Pollack (MT), 8-6
- Order of finish: Doubles (1,3,2); Singles (3,1,2,4,6,5)

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