

Raiders Fall in Title Match, 4-3

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MOBILE, Ala. - Andreas Siljestrom's double fault on match point gave Amanjot Singh a three-set win and 43rd-ranked Louisiana-Lafayette a 4-3 victory over No. 32 Middle Tennessee Sunday in the finals of the Sun Belt Championships at the Bruce David Lubel Memorial Courts.

- **Photos:** [SBC Championship Gallery](#)

Middle Tennessee (16-7) lost for the first time since March 17, a string of eight wins in a row, dropping the final four matches to the Ragin' Cajuns in a reverse of roles from last year. The Blue Raiders defeated UL, 4-3, in a third-set tiebreaker in 2005 in the SBC Tournament finals for Middle Tennessee's first Sun Belt championship.

"Right now I'm stunned, shocked, in disbelief," head coach Dale Short said after the match.

"We've won the last two matches against [Louisiana-Lafayette]

and we lost the doubles point. We win it [Sunday] and then we lose four singles matches. It's a heart-breaking loss.

"But I'm very proud of our team and at least we know this is not the end. We had these types



of losses in the first half of the season and we knew we were better than those results. We were playing with too much pressure early in the year and I thought [Sunday] we played with too much pressure."

The Blue Raiders won the doubles point in the match and were victorious in the first two completed singles outings, but UL was up a set in the other four matches on the court. The Ragin' Cajuns won three straight matches in straight sets to set up Singh and Siljestrom at No. 1 for the deciding point.

In doubles the Blue Raiders won the first and last completed matches to take the first point.

Siljestrom and Marco Born, ranked fourth nationally, went back and forth at No. 1 with UL's Singh and Dusan Tabak before the Blue Raider duo finally broke at 6-5. Born then served out the match for an 8-5 victory.

But the Ragin' Cajuns tied the doubles with a victory at No. 2. Shaun Ellison and Robin Ley got a break at 3-2 and were up 5-2 before Middle Tennessee's Brandon Allan and Kai Schledorn broke to get back on serve at 5-6. But UL's combo was too strong, breaking again in the final game for an 8-6 win.

That left everything to No. 3, where Middle Tennessee's Greg Pollack and Morgan Richard did almost everything right, breaking twice and playing magnificent doubles in an 8-5 triumph over Evghenii Corduneanu and Arlen Domoney.

Allan quickly disposed of Tabak, 6-2, 6-2, at No. 4, and Born was another easy winner, 7-5, 6-2, over 95th-ranked Corduneanu at No. 2 for a 3-0 Middle Tennessee lead in the match.

Ellison started UL's comeback with a 6-2, 6-3, triumph over Rishan Kuruppu at No. 5 before Ley outdueled Schledorn in a first-set tiebreaker, 7-4, and went on to a 7-6, (4), 6-2, victory at No. 3. Domoney's 6-2, 6-4, win over Pollack at No. 6 tied the match at three and set the stage for Singh and Siljestrom.

Siljestrom broke late in the second set and served it out, 6-4, then broke again in the first game of the third set. But Singh continued to battle and finally got back on the serve at 3-4. The UL senior won the final three games, breaking Siljestrom again in the final game for the 6-4, 4-6, 6-4, victory and Louisiana-Lafayette's first conference tennis championship since 1998 and third overall (1992).

Short said the Blue Raiders gave UL hope with the losses in the first set in four singles matches.

"We won the doubles point but then lost some close first set in singles, and I think that gave UL some hope and spirit and it really put some extra pressure on us," Short said.

"[Siljestrom's] serve has been on-and-off for a long time and that was the difference in the end."

Middle Tennessee will find out its place in the NCAA Team Championships on May 3 with the NCAA announcement show. Further details on that will come next week. For full results of the Sun Belt Championships, log on to sunbeltsports.org.

#43 Louisiana-Lafayette 4, #32 Middle Tennessee 3

SINGLES

1. Amanjot Singh (UL) def. (46) Andreas Siljestrom (MT), 6-4, 4-6, 6-4
 2. Marco Born (MT) def. (95) Evghenii Corduneanu (UL), 7-5, 6-2
 3. Robin Ley (UL) def. Kai Schledorn (MT), 7-6 (4), 6-2
 4. Brandon Allan (MT) def. Dusan Tabak (UL), 6-2, 6-2
 5. Shaun Ellison (UL) def. Rishan Kuruppu (MT), 6-2, 6-3
 6. Arlen Domoney (UL) def. Greg Pollack (MT), 6-2, 6-4
- Order of Finish: 4,2,5,3,6,1*

DOUBLES

1. (4) Born-Siljestrom (MT) def. (54) Singh-Tabak (UL), 8-5
 2. Ley-Ellison (MT) def. Allan-Schledorn (MT), 8-6
 3. Pollack-Morgan Richard (MT) def. Corduneanu-Domoney (UL), 8-5
- Order of Finish: 1,2,3*

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