

# This Week in Blue Raider Tennis

May 10, 2006 · MT Media Relations

## **MEN RANKED 31ST HEADING INTO NCAA'S:**

Middle Tennessee remained 31st in the FILA ITA national rankings heading into this weekend's NCAA Team Championships. The ranking is the highest for the Blue Raiders this season. Middle Tennessee has been ranked between 31 and 42 for the entire spring schedule. In the individual rankings, junior Andreas Siljestrom jumped eight spots to No. 48 and the doubles tandem of Siljestrom and junior Marco Born remained sixth in the country.



Siljestrom-Born won the Polo Ralph Lauren ITA All-American Championships in October, the first leg of the collegiate grand slam, and reached the finals of the ITA National Intercollegiate Indoor Championships in November. The duo has reached as high as No. 2 this spring and been ranked between second and sixth during the dual match schedule. **LIVE SCORING SET FOR NCAA MATCHES:** Host institution Baylor will offer live scoring for this weekend's matches from the Baylor Tennis Center. Fans can find the link by clicking on the NCAA Tournament logo at the bottom right of the front page at GoBlueRaiders.com or at <http://baylorbears.cstv.com/ot/06-ncaa-tennis-regionals.html>. Middle Tennessee plays 34th-ranked Tulsa Saturday at 2 p.m. in the first round of the NCAA Team Championships and would face either Baylor or Texas Southern Sunday at 2 p.m. in the second round. All match times are Central Time. **FOUR PLAYERS, STRINGER EARN DEGREES:** Four Middle Tennessee players and a former stringer all received bachelor degrees on Saturday during Commencement Ceremonies at Murphy Center. Brandon Allan (Finance, minor in Business Administration), Rishan Kuruppu (Finance, minor in Business Administration), Andreas Siljestrom (Economics, minor in Business Administration) and former Blue Raider Anant Sitaram (Economics, minor in Mathematics) all earned degrees on Saturday, as did former stringer Gene Gerhiser (Recording Industry, minor in Entertainment Technology). Kai Schledorn needs just nine hours and will graduate in August. Two former female tennis players - Jennifer Klaschka and Emily Vest - also graduated Saturday. Klaschka earned a degree in Mass Communication with a minor in Psychology, while Vest received her degree in Animal Science with a minor in Biology. One other note from the spring semester - Schledorn and Siljestrom both posted 4.0 grade-point-averages taking 18 and 15 hours, respectively, during the semester. **SBC CHAMPIONSHIP HIGHLIGHTS ON XOS:** Highlights from the Sun Belt Tennis Championships in Mobile, Ala., may be seen on XOS on your computer. Registration is now open at [www.sunbeltsports.org](http://www.sunbeltsports.org) for all of the Sun Belt's spring

championships - golf, tennis, outdoor track and field, softball and baseball. Fans can sign up for each individual championship or for the annual subscription at a cost of \$59.95. A complete highlight show of the Aéropostale Men's and Women's Tennis Championships is ready for viewing and can be seen for a low, low price of \$4.95. **SCOUTING THIS WEEKEND'S OPPONENT:** Middle Tennessee faces 34th-ranked Tulsa in the first round of the NCAA Team Championships Saturday in Waco, Texas, at 2 p.m. The Golden Hurricane enter the match 17-10 overall after winning the Conference USA Tournament and receiving the league's automatic berth with a 4-1 victory over 37th-ranked Rice. Tulsa has three ranked singles players - No. 7 Arnau Brugues, 62nd-ranked Federico Soriano and No. 115 Ricardo Soriano. Brugues and Aleksander Charpantidis are rated 59th nationally in doubles. **BLUE RAIDERS MAKE EIGHTH NCAA TRIP:** Middle Tennessee makes its eighth NCAA Team Championships appearance, all in the last 12 years under head coach Dale Short. The Blue Raiders received an at-large bid to the tournament for the fourth time in school history and are part of the 64-team field for the second straight season. Middle Tennessee is 2-7 all-time in NCAA play with victories in 1997 (Florida International) and 2002 (Alabama). The squad lost, 4-3, to 36th-ranked Auburn last year in Oxford, Miss. The Blue Raiders were without No. 3 singles and No. 1 doubles player Kai Schledorn, who returned home to Germany to be with his ailing mother, who died less than two weeks after the tournament. **BORN APPROACHES DOUBLES RECORD:** Juniors Marco Born and Andreas Siljestrom have posted a 24-6 doubles record this academic year, including 12-3 in dual matches, reaching as high as No. 2 in the national rankings. Born is 26-6 this year in doubles, playing the first two dual matches of the year with Greg Pollack because of an injury to Siljestrom. Born is just one victory from tying Michael Staniak (2001) and Julius Robberts (1996) for seventh on the single-season doubles wins list. He is also three wins from tying his own mark of 29 victories from last season. **TULSA NOT A FAMILIAR FOE:** Middle Tennessee takes on 34th-ranked Tulsa in Saturday's first round at 2 p.m. at the Baylor Tennis Center. The Blue Raiders and Golden Hurricane have met just four times in school history, three under head coach Dale Short, and not since the 1999 campaign. The series is tied, 2-2, with Tulsa winning in 1969 (5-1) and in the last meeting -- March 5, 1999 at the HEB Invitational in Corpus Christi, Texas (4-2). The Blue Raiders picked up victories on March 13, 1993 in Knoxville, Tenn. (6-1), and again March 7, 1997 at the HEB (4-2). **BAYLOR, TEXAS SOUTHERN ALSO NOT FAMILIAR:** The other two participants in the regional are also not very familiar to the Blue Raider program. Middle Tennessee and Baylor have met just once - March 2, 2003 - with the then fourth-ranked Bears defeating the Blue Raiders, 7-0, in Waco. Middle Tennessee and Texas Southern have never met on the tennis court. **SILJESTROM IN SINGLES, DOUBLES TOP 10:** Junior Andreas Siljestrom ranks in the Top 10 on the career singles and doubles listings at Middle Tennessee. With his win in the semifinals of the Sun Belt Championships, Siljestrom moved past Michael Staniak and into 10th place on the all-time singles list with 61 victories. He needs two more singles triumphs to tie Oliver Foreman (1999-02) for ninth place. In doubles, the Stockholm, Sweden, native has 73 career wins, ranking eighth. He needs two victories to tie Anthony Deluise (1994, '96-98) for seventh and two to tie Oliver Foreman (1999-02) for sixth place on the all-time list. **ALLAN FIFTH, SCHLEDORN 11TH ON ALL-TIME LIST:** Senior Brandon Allan has recorded a 14-7 dual match record this spring in doubles with partner Kai Schledorn, with Allan moving into fifth place on the all-time doubles wins list with 78. Allan needs three more victories to tie Marshall Brown (1995-98) for fourth on the all-time list. Schledorn is 11th on the same list and needs one more win to tie Daniel Klemetz (2000-03) and Mark Pellerin (1998-01) for 10th. **BLUE RAIDERS ENTER TOURNEY ON A ROLL:** Middle Tennessee started the season 6-2 with wins over Indiana and NCAA participants Rice and Minnesota. But the squad lost three in a row and four of six in one stretch in March, dropping 4-3 decisions to Texas Tech and South Alabama at the HEB Invitational in Corpus Christi, Texas. After a 4-0 defeat against Boise

State, another NCAA participant, at the National Blue-Gray Tennis Classic in Montgomery, Ala., the Blue Raiders won eight straight before falling in the finals of the Sun Belt Championships. The club also finished the home schedule undefeated, a perfect 10-0, and are 5-4 at neutral sites this season.

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*Printed on July 31, 2014*

*Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/5244>*