Road trip to Florida on deck for Middle Tennessee

Women's tennis has won two of last three matches

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – Middle Tennessee women's tennis will look to win for the third and fourth times in a five-match stretch when the Blue Raiders head to south Florida to face Florida Atlantic and FIU Saturday and Wednesday, respectively. The two matches conclude a season-opening run of 10 contests out of the opening 11 this spring away from Murfreesboro. "We are excited to head down to Florida for a few days," head coach Shelley Godwin said. "We have been spending a lot of time working on specifics for each individual player and think it will pay off in our two upcoming matches." Despite a recent setback to No. 18 Vanderbilt, Middle Tennessee brings a 5-4 record into the two-match swing. The Blue Raiders' last victory was in their only home match thus far in the spring, a 4-3 decision over Chattanooga Feb. 23. Junior Lexi Brand boasts the program's top singles ledger at 6-3 and has played in the lineup from the No. 2 through 4 spots. She owns one more win than freshman Nayara Moraes, who has competed at the No. 4 and 5 positions this spring. In doubles action the duo with the most triumphs is Brand and senior Marietta Bigus, who have combined for three wins, including two at the top slot. Three other tandems have collected two triumphs with the pairing of sophomore Flavia Nagayama and junior Yuiri Nomoto posting an unbeaten mark. Florida Atlantic brings a 6-1 record into Saturday's 1 p.m. match after knocking off Georgia Southern Feb. 25. It was the sixth-straight victory for the Owls after they dropped the season opener to Stephen F.

Austin. Saturday's contest at Patch Reef Park in Boca Raton, Fla., will be the fourth between the two schools, all in Florida. FAU has won each of the previous three meetings. FIU has dropped to 2-9 this spring, although the Panthers have played a rigorous schedule to date with eight nationally-ranked foes among their 11 matches. Despite the 1-8 start before two matches in Denton, Texas, last weekend, FIU remained listed in the Campbell's/ITA national rankings. The Panthers knocked off South Alabama 4-3 Feb. 25 before falling by the same score the next day at No. 60 North Texas in the two-match swing in Denton. FIU will not compete again until it plays host to MT at Noon Wednesday at the FIU Tennis Courts further down the coast in Miami. The Panthers have claimed triumphs in six of the seven matches between the two teams with the lone Blue Raider victory coming in Miami in 2003.

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