No. 46 men's tennis prepped for NCAA tournament showdown against No. 21 Michigan

Blue Raiders, Wolverines set for 9 a.m. Saturday

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The No. 46 Middle Tennessee men's tennis team begins its NCAA quest this weekend, traveling to Oxford, Miss., for the first and second rounds of the NCAA Regional hosted by Mississippi at the Palmer/Sallloum Tennis Center. The Blue Raiders will square off against No. 21 Michigan at 9 a.m. CT Saturday, while the No. 13 Rebels will face Binghamton at noon. The winner of each match will meet on Sunday at 1 p.m. for the right to advance to the Sweet 16. MT (19-7) and Michigan (17-7) have met twice previously, with both contests as part of the O'Charley's Invitational in Knoxville, Tenn. The Wolverines earned a 6-1 win in the spring of 1995, while the Blue Raiders claimed a 5-2 victory over Michigan, ranked No. 39 at the time, in 1997. MT earned its 11th NCAA Championship berth and third in the past four years after winning the Sun Belt Championship title for the second consecutive year. With 19 victories this year, MT has amassed the most wins since 1997 when the Blue Raiders finished 24-5. MT has only dropped two matches since March 6, a 16-match stretch, with both of those losses coming to nationally ranked opponents. The Blue Raiders have defeated seven nationally ranked teams this season and have won 11 of their last 12 matches, losing only one point in the last three matches.

Ben Davis has been impressive throughout his sophomore campaign playing in the No. 1 position. A two-time Sun Belt all-conference honoree, Davis has reeled off 11 consecutive singles victories for a 25-8 overall and 17-4 dual record. During that stretch, which dates back to March 15, he has only dropped three sets and has knocked off the top competitor from seven nationally ranked teams. Senior Matthew Langley has delivered a solid season as well, posting a 24-13 overall and 17-8 dual record, in addition to earning his second straight Most Outstanding Player honor at this year's Sun Belt tournament. He has won 10 of his last 11 singles matches, with each of those victories coming in straight sets. In fact, he has won 15 dual matches in straight sets. Newcomers Christoph Lang and Ettore Zito have been key in the middle of the lineup, primarily playing at No. 3 and No. 4, respectively. Lang is 17-9 overall and 15-8 in dual action, while Zito has a 24-11 and 13-7 dual record. Both have won their last three singles matches and Zito has claimed nine of his last 10. In doubles action, Marlon Brand and Yannick Born have primarily held the top spot, combining for a 12-10 record. The all-conference duo of Davis and Lang hold a 15-10 overall and 13-9 dual record, winning nine of their last 10. Langley and Zito round out the doubles teams with a 16-13 overall and 12-8 dual mark. Michigan enters its seventh consecutive NCAA tournament and 22nd overall. The Wolverines are led by Evan King, ranked No. 6 nationally. King has won 15 consecutive matches and holds a 32-6 overall record, including a 20-2 dual mark. King and partner Shaun Bernstein rank 29th in doubles with a 21-12 overall and 13-9 dual mark. Fans can follow @MTAthletics for live updates from Oxford. In addition, live stats and a live blog are available for all matches by clicking here.

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