Blue Raiders drop season opener at Akron

MT falls short to defending MAC champs

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- **Box Score (PDF)**

AKRON, Ohio - Middle Tennessee battled the defending MAC Champions, but fell short in a 4-3 season-opening loss to Akron on Friday afternoon.

The Zips (1-0) took an early one point lead with a pair of victories in doubles, before MT (0-1) equaled the series with a straight sweep in the No. 5 singles position. Akron then went on a three-point run to secure their first win of the spring season.

Akron's Prang Pantusart and Angelina Jogasuria knocked off Yuiri Nomoto and Carla Nava in the top doubles slot, 8-2. The Zips claimed the doubles point with an Olga Shkundina/Ksenia Berestetska 8-5 win over Irina Constantinide/Nayara Moraes.

Avoiding the doubles sweep, the Raiders claimed an 8-6 victory from Flavia Nagayama/Alexandra Torres over Angelika Jogasuria/Madison Cohen.

MT tied the match at 1-1 when Moraes picked up a 6-1, 6-2 win over Cohen in the five slot. Akron followed with three straight victories. In the No. 1 singles spot, Shkundina defeated Nomoto (6-1, 7-5), while Pantusart won 6-4, 6-3 over Nagayama in the third singles contest. Andrea Duva won 6-0, 6-4 over Middle Tennessee freshman Torres in No. 6 singles to secure the win for Akron.

Constantinide won in two sets (7-6 (5), 6-3) over Angelina Jogasuria. The senior Nava followed up with a four three set battle to win (2-6, 6-3, 1-0 (8) over Berestetska.

"Although we didn't get the result that we wanted, I am proud of the way we competed," said head coach Shelley Godwin. "We were able to identify key areas we need to work on and will use today's experience to prepare for the match tomorrow morning with Penn State."

Middle Tennessee returns to action tomorrow at 8 a.m. in a neutral site matchup with No. 50 Penn State.

Akron 4, Middle Tennessee 3

Singles competition

1. Shkundina, Olga (AK) def. Nomoto, Yuiri (MT) 6-1, 7-5
2. Constantinide, Irina (MT) def. Jogasuria, Angelina (AK) 7-6 (5), 6-3
3. Pantusart, Prang (AK) def. Nagayama, Flavia (MT) 6-4, 6-3
4. Nava, Carla (MT) def. Berestetska, Ksenia (AK) 2-6, 6-3, 1-0 (8)
5. Moraes, Nayara (MT) def. Cohen, Madison (AK) 6-1, 6-2
6. Duva, Andrea (AK) def. Torres, Alexandra (MT) 6-0, 6-4

Doubles competition

1. Pantusart, Prang/Jogasuria, Angelina (AK) def. Nomoto, Yuiri/Nava, Carla (MT) 8-2
2. Shkundina, Olga/Berestetska, Ksenia (AK) def. Constantinide, Irina/Moraes, Nayara (MT) 8-5
3. Nagayama, Flavia/Torres, Alexandra (MT) def. Jogasuria, Angelika/Cohen, Madison (AK) 8-6

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