ITA Kick-off Weekend brings Blue Raiders to Durham, N.C.

Friday starts with matchup at No. 5 Duke

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Coming off a 2-0 weekend in team duals, No. 46 Middle Tennessee heads to Durham, N.C., this weekend for the 2013 Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) Kick-off Weekend event.

No. 5 Duke University (3-0) will host MT, No. 37 Northwestern (5-0) and No. 43 Virginia Tech (2-0) at the Ambler Tennis Stadium, which also houses the Sheffield Indoor Tennis Center.

MT will square off against Duke on Friday at 9 a.m. CT. The winner of MT/Duke will face the winner of NU/VT on Saturday, with the consolation finals on Sunday.

"These two matches offer our team two huge opportunities against higher ranked teams with nothing to lose," head coach Jimmy Borendame said. "Duke, Northwestern and Virginia Tech are all elite programs and very well coached. We look forward to going to toe to toe with these teams this weekend."

MT started its season with 7-0 and 6-1 victories over Lipscomb and Murray State last weekend, respectively. Ben Davis, currently ranked No. 101 by ITA, went 3-0 last weekend, defeating Lipscomb's Oliver Strecker in singles and teaming with David Fox for two doubles victories.

Duke has five competitors ranked in the top 50, and six ranked overall. Henrique Cunha (No. 11) and Michael Redlicki (No. 14) are in the top 20, and will likely anchor Duke's No. 1 and No. 2 singles positions.

For Northwestern, Raleigh Smith is ranked 108th. Virginia Tech's Amerigo Contina is No. 56 and Andreas Bjerrehus is 29th.

"For our program to get back to the ITA National Indoor it's a major step in the right direction," Borendame said. "Only the top 64 teams in the nation get chosen to play and were excited about the opportunity."

Live stats for the event are available here. For live video, click here.

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