Mississippi State visits Raiders to open homestand

MT and Bulldogs meet for 11th time

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A three match homestand for Middle Tennessee women's tennis starts Wednesday, March 13 when the Blue Raiders host SEC foe Mississippi State. Due to potential inclement weather, the match has moved to 2 p.m. and will be played at the Nashboro Village Athletic Club in Nashville.

Middle Tennessee (6-6) split last weekend, dropping their first match to Louisiana, 4-3, on Friday. However, the Raiders bounced back in a dominating 6-1 win over Southern Miss on Sunday. MT has compiled a 5-2 mark during the last seven matches.

There are three Raiders with multiple match win streaks. Junior Flavia Nagayama leads the way with a 10-2 mark in singles this season. The junior has won eight consecutive contests since Feb. 3.

Since moving to the No. 5 position, senior Carla Nava has come on strong with six consecutive victories. Nava is 8-3 in duals action, while collecting five wins with senior Yuiri Nomoto in doubles competition.

Despite a slow start to the dual season, freshman Irina Constantinide has picked up steam with four straight victories. The Romania native made her first start in the one position last week, picking up a 6-0, 7-6 straight set sweep over USM's Frances Askew. Constantinide and Nayara Moraes have a team-best 6-5 mark in doubles action this season, winning their last three contests.

Mississippi State (5-6, 0-4 SEC) started off the season 5-2, but has dropped the last four contests. The Bulldogs were shutout 7-0 in their last two matches at No. 62 Tennessee and No. 9 Georgia. Sarai Flores leads MSU with a 5-3 mark this season. Alexandra Perper and Naomi Tran are ranked 46th nationally in doubles. The tandem is 6-2 in doubles action this season.

MT and the Bulldogs meet for the 11th time on Wednesday with MSU holding a 6-4 edge in the all-time series. Middle Tennessee has won the last three matches with the most recent, a 4-3 victory over the Bulldogs in Starkville on Feb. 7, 2004.

"Tomorrow's match against Mississippi State is a great opportunity for our program," stated MT head coach Shelley Godwin. "We will have to be ready from the first point to take advantage of every chance we get to put ourselves in position to win."

On March 17, MT hosts UALR before closing out this home stretch with South Alabama on March 24. Live results of Wednesday's match with MSU will be posted online at GoBlueRaiders.com and @MT_WomensTennis.

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