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For more information contact:

WACO, Texas – The No. 17 Baylor men’s tennis team is set for a doubleheader this Saturday at the Hurd Tennis Center, hosting UTRGV at 1 p.m. and No. 16 Illinois at 6 p.m. This marks the Bears’ first outdoor match of the season.

Baylor (8-6) enters the doubleheader fresh off a dominant 4-0 sweep of No. 46 Tulsa on the road. The Bears showcased their depth with a standout singles and doubles performance from Louis Bowden. Now, they turn their attention to two very different matches: a struggling UTRGV team and a highly ranked Illinois squad.

UTRGV (2-8) arrives in Waco after a tough 0-7 loss to No. 63 SMU. Historically, Baylor has dominated this matchup, holding a 15-10 all-time record and winning the last 10 meetings dating back to 1994. In fact, UTRGV has not scored a point against the Bears since that 1994 match, which Baylor won 5-2.

This season, the Vaqueros have shown some promise in doubles play on Court One, where they’ve posted a 3-4 record. However, their singles performance has been inconsistent, with just two wins on Courts Three through Six this spring. Baylor will try to capitalize on these weaknesses and extend their streak.

The nightcap against Illinois (5-2) suggests a tougher test. Both teams have faced grueling schedules, with all their losses coming against top 20 opponents. Illinois has fallen to No. 16 Tennessee and No. 15 Duke but holds impressive wins over No. 12 Michigan, No. 31 Clemson, No. 35 Auburn, and No. 50 Notre Dame. Similarly, Baylor has battled four top 10 teams and defeated No. 15 Duke on Feb. 15 at the ITA National Team Indoor Championships. Every loss for the Bears was against top 10 opponents, including No. 2 TCU and No. 3 Ohio State, both of which they’ve faced twice.

The similarities between the two teams extend beyond schedules. Baylor holds a .612 winning percentage in singles and a .556 mark in doubles, while Illinois is slightly stronger in singles (.633) but weaker in doubles (.500). Both teams have struggled on Court Three in singles but have found success on Court Six. However, Illinois has faced significant challenges in doubles play, winning merely two matches all season on Courts One and Two. Baylor, meanwhile, has been more balanced in doubles, going 9-2 on Court Two and 7-6 on Court Three despite a 4-8 record on Court One.

Baylor’s singles lineup is led by No. 43 Devin Badenhorst and No. 86 Oskar Brostrom Poulsen, who have been consistent performers this season. The Bears also boast four ranked doubles pairs, highlighted by the No. 12 duo of Miladinovic/Poulsen. Illinois counters with three ranked singles players, headlined by No. 12 Kenta Miyoshi, but lacks ranked doubles pairs.

Saturday’s doubleheader offers Baylor a chance to solidify its top 20 ranking. A win against UTRGV would extend their dominance in the series, while a victory over Illinois would boost their resume as the Bears continue to navigate a challenging schedule.

After the matches this Saturday, Baylor hosts Cornell and Lehigh in another doubleheader at the Hurd

Tennis Center on Sunday, March 9.

For the latest news on the Baylor men's tennis team all year long, follow its official Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts: @BaylorMTennis.

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