

ISU men's tennis claims doubles title

Written by Sam Isdale, Reporter
Tuesday, 22 January 2013 15:11

The opening weekend for Illinois State's tennis was successful for the men's team, but for the women's team was described as uneventful by head coach Chris Hoover. While the men's team traveled to Drake in Des Moines, Iowa, for the MVC Individual Championships, the women traveled to Champaign for their first tournament of the spring season.

"This weekend's competition was uneventful for us, but overall was a good start to the spring season," head women's coach Chris Hoover said. "There is definitely still room for improvement, so this week we will focus on practicing hard and positioning ourselves for success in our next match."

The women's team used a new format for the competition which consisted of four rounds of singles and one round of doubles. The only match that was victorious for the women's team was a singles match played by Kadi Ilves, she defeated Illini's Julia Jamieson, 6-2, 6-3.

"I am happy with the way Kadi played," Hoover said. "She did well and was able to come away with a solid victory against a tough opponent."

The rest of the women's team suffered losses to the Illini. Emmie Marx lost to Allison Falkin, 6-3, 6-2. Carolina Abello and Stefanie Youngberg were also defeated, 6-4, 6-3, 6-0, 6-4, respectively. For doubles, Phyllis Tigges and Sarah Paulson were dominated, 6-1, 6-1.

It was a different story for the men's team last weekend. All teammates were able to advance to the semifinal round. The Redbirds ended Friday with 10-3 record.

"I believe we are off to a great start for this spring," head men's coach Cris James said.

Illinois State's men's team started strong as Erik Brunskog defeated Tomislav Gregurovic of Wichita State, 3-6, 7-6 (2), 7-6 (7). He then beat Hamish Weerasinghe of Bradley, 6-4, 7-5.

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Alexander Pelaez came out on top against Billy Paluch of Creighton, 6-3, 6-2. He continued on to defeat Aruthu Romanet of Bradley, 6-3, 6-4, to earn first during flight one.

“Erik was down a couple of points in his first match, but was about to come back and pull out a win,” James said. “It was good to see him stick with it and come through in the clutch moments.”

Michael Sellitto bested Ryan Drake of Drake, 6-2, 6-1. Jacob Wilson did not find success in his first match where he lost against Guillermo Nicol of Wichita State, 6-4, 6-4. Muddappa Appanervanda won his first match against Juan Diego Cuadrado of Bradley, 7-6 (5), 6-4.

New to the team, Jakub Eisner and Rolondo Torrellas showed their skills on the court. Torrellas bested Quinn Dippel of Creighton, 6-1, 7-6 (6), and then beat Szymon Opieczzone of SIU. Eisner found success against his first opponent Juan Diego Cuadrado of Bradley, but lost against Jean Erasmus of Drake, 1-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Doubles found victory with a 4-1 overall record on day two.

“We’re not really sure what the doubles teams are going to consist of this season,” James said. “Right now we’re just trying new teams and looking for improvements and progress.”

Pelaez and Eisner dominated against Guillermo Nicol and Tomislav of Wichita State, 4-1. They went on to best Martijn Admiraal and Brandon Flores of SIU, 8-3, advancing to finals. Appanervando and Torrellas defeated Johnny Rigby and Badr Cherradi of SIU, 8-5, then won against Justin Abrams and Cuadrado of Bradley, 8-5, to move on to finals round.

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Brunskog took down Southern's Flores in singles, 6-1, 6-2, allowing him a spot in the finals. Torrellas conquered Kevin Keiner of Bradley, 6-0, 6-0, also moving on to finals. Sellitto beat Admiraal of SIU.

"Some of the singles matches we lost were pretty close," James said. "Matches can come down to one or two points and we need to value those situations. We need to focus on sustaining our level throughout the entire match."

Pelaez and Eisner were the only Redbirds who took first place for the doubles in the MVC Individual Championships against Alan Salibasic and James McKie of Drake, 8-7 (3).

Torrellas lost to Ben Lott of Drake, 6-3, 6-2, in singles, Brunskog was bested by Robin Goodman of Drake, 6-2, 6-2 and Sellitto was beat by Grant Tesmer of Drake, 6-2, 6-3. Appanervanda and Torrellas faced a loss to Alvaro Gutierrez and Matheus Pereira of Wichita State, 8-6, while Wilson and Selitto fell to Michael Davis and Arthur Romanet of Bradley, 8-7 (5).

"Overall we played pretty well this weekend, but I look forward to seeing some bigger and better things from this team this season," James said.

The men's team will head to Iowa City, Iowa, for action starting Jan. 25, while the women's team will not be traveling again until their competition on Feb. 1 at Butler.