

ASU Men's Tennis Earns 6-1 Win over Belmont

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A day after the Mountaineers saw their three-match winning streak snapped, Appalachian State University men's tennis rebounded with a 6-1 win over Belmont at Deer Valley Racquet Club on Sunday. The Black and Gold (4-3) regain their winning record, while Belmont (1-4) continues to

stumble in 2012. In doubles action, Appalachian seniors Alain Humblet (Montreal, Quebec/DE Mortagne) and Steve Karendal (Kernersville, N.C./Lees McRae) were the first to notch a win, turning a 3-4 deficit into a 7-4 advantage en route to an 8-6 win at No 2. Within moments, ASU's No. 3 duo of Andrew McKinnon (Moorseville, N.C./Lake Norman) and Zeke Sansing (Memphis, Tenn./White Station) capitalized on two serve breaks to take their match 8-3 and secure the doubles point for the Apps.

At No. 1 doubles, Appalachian senior Philip Kloc (Melbourne, Australia/Mentone Grammar) and sophomore Sebastien King (Montreal, Quebec/George Vanier) were on-serve as both teams scored a break-point before the match was halted and went unfinished. Individually, ASU senior Alex Markov won three straight games to close out the first set and four-straight in his second, cruising to a 6-3, 6-2 win at No. 1 to start the singles scoring.

In No. 3 singles, Humblet broke serve late in the first set and in the first game of the second. The Mountaineer tacked on another broken serve late in the latter set, scoring a 6-4, 6-2 win, extending Appalachian's lead to 3-0. After winning four unanswered games to end the first set, Kloc put himself in position to secure the match-clinching point. In the second set, the Mountaineer's late break put him up 5-3, and he succeeded in holding serve for the 6-3, 6-3 victory to extend ASU's team score to an unreachable 4-0.

At No. 5 singles, Karendal scored his second win of the day in quick fashion, as Belmont's netter was forced to retire by injury after only three games. No. 6 sophomore Matt Saltgaver (Winter Park, Fla./Winter Park) tallied Appalachian's final point, maintaining consistent pressure to score a break in the first set to win 6-3. In the second, Saltgaver was serving for the match at 5-4, but his Belmont opponent hung tough to equalize the score, and after back-to-back breaks, the combatants found themselves deadlocked, 6-6. In the end, Saltgaver regained his composure and swept the tiebreaker for the 6-3, 7-6(7-0) win.

In the final match on the courts, Belmont's Henrique Norbiato scored Belmont's only sets of the day, recording a 6-4 first set before sending the second into a tiebreaker. Though ASU's King pulled out the second-set breaker, Norbiato prevailed in the super tie-breaker, earning Belmont's lone point at No. 4 singles, 6-4, 6-7(3-7), (10-8).

The Mountaineers will have two weeks to prepare for their next match, as Appalachian State is set to open Southern Conference action in its next match, a March 11 meeting with Samford in Birmingham.

Photo Courtesy: Phillip Kloc, by Meghan Gay, ASU Athletics