

ASU Men's Tennis Falls Short at UNCG

Written by Paul Blascovich
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Appalachian State University men's tennis fell to UNCG, 4-3, in Southern Conference action at UNCG Tennis Courts on Saturday. The Mountaineers (10-6, 4-2 SoCon) incur only their third loss in as many weeks, while UNCG (8-9, 5-2 SoCon) climbs to third place in the SoCon standings. In doubles,

UNCG's top pair pulled out an 8-6 win at No. 1 to get the Spartans' momentum going, but Appalachian's No. 3 duo, senior Steve Karendal (Kernersville, N.C./Lees-McRae) and junior Andrew McKinnon (Mooresville, N.C./Lake Norman), evened the action with a 8-4 win. The doubles point hinged on the No. 2 match, in which seniors Alain Humblet (Montreal, Quebec/DE Mortagne) and Alex Markov (Pernik, Bulgaria/Hawai'i Pacific) found themselves deadlocked at 8-8 against their UNCG foes. In the tiebreaker, the Spartan tandem triumphed 9-8(7-5) to steal the pairs point and a 1-0 team lead.

On the singles side, Mountaineer sophomore Matt Saltgaver (Winter Park, Fla./Winter Park) made quick work of his match in the No. 6 spot, winning 6-3, 6-0 to equalize the overall score. Karendal soon followed with his 6-2, 6-1 victory at No. 5 singles to give the Apps their first lead, 2-1. UNCG retorted with two-set wins in the top two spots, as the Spartans came out on top in No. 1 and No. 2 singles by identical 7-5, 6-3 margins to take a 3-2 lead in the match.

Humblet recovered from his doubles loss to pull out a strong 6-4, 6-3 win in the No. 3 match to tie the match, 3-3.

In the decisive No. 4 clash, ASU sophomore Sebastien King (Montreal, Quebec/George Vanier) fell in his first set before hanging tough in the second, forcing a tiebreaker. King took a 6-1 lead in the extra points, but UNCG's Randy Phillips rallied to win 9-7 and close the match with his 6-2, 7-6(9-7) win.

Appalachian State travels to Presbyterian for its final road match on Tuesday at 2:30 p.m. The Mountaineers then host Wofford on Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.

Appalachian Women's Tennis Sweeps Western Carolina, 5-0

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The Mountaineers scored 62 games to the Wildcats' 12, as Appalachian State University women's tennis trounced High-Country rival Western Carolina, 5-0, in Southern Conference action at ASU Tennis Courts on Saturday. Appalachian (10-7, 3-3 SoCon) snapped a three-match losing streak with the victory, while Western Carolina (1-12, 0-5 SoCon) was dismissed still seeking a conference win.

In doubles action, Mountaineer seniors Gisela Fernandez (Guadalajara, Mexico/TEC Monterrey) and Gabriela Celi (Orlando, Fla./Lake Howell) made quick work of their No. 2 match, jumping out to a 5-0 lead before taking an 8-1 win.

In the No. 1 doubles match, Appalachian juniors Ellie Linsell (Southampton, England/Cheam) and Jennifer Ansari (Greensboro, N.C./Walter Hines Page) needed a bit more time to seal the deal, but the Black and Gold comfortably took the match, 8-2. WCU did not field a No. 3 team, rounding out the Appalachian doubles sweep. Appalachian State was spotted its second point as the shorthanded Wildcats were forced to forfeit the No. 6 position.

ASU junior Kim-Lea Dinh (Maisons-Alfort, France/Lycee Eugene Delacroix) took the court at No. 4 and vanquished her WCU rival in a 6-0, 6-0 shutout to give the Black and Gold a 3-0 lead in the team scoring.

The clinching point came in anticlimactic fashion as Celi won her No. 3 singles match by retirement, 4-1. Shortly thereafter, senior Blakeley Bean (Alpharetta, Ga./South Forsyth) tore through her No. 5 singles match in a 6-0, 6-0 rout to keep the Mountaineer momentum going. In the top individual spots, Western Carolina put up a more substantial fight. Linsell found herself trailing 0-1 in her No. 1 match before collecting herself for a 6-1 set. Ansari held a slim lead for most of her first set, winning 6-4 at No. 2.

With Linsell two points from winning her match, an unexpected downpour put a damper on the match, and action was halted, giving Appalachian the 5-0 win.

The Mountaineers hit the road Sunday for a noon match at Chattanooga before returning home on Tuesday to host Davidson at 3:30 p.m.