

## ASU Men's Tennis Downs Chattanooga

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Despite several tense moments for the Mountaineers, Appalachian State University men's tennis defeated Southern Conference opponent Chattanooga, 5-2, at ASU Courts on Saturday afternoon. The Mountaineers (13-6, 6-2 SoCon) preserve a flawless 6-0 record at home and clinch a first-round bye

in the 2012 Southern Conference Tournament, while Chattanooga (13-7, 4-5 SoCon) falls for the third time in its last four matches. In doubles, senior Philip Kloc (Melbourne, Australia/Mentone Grammar) and sophomore Sebastien King (Montreal, Quebec/George Vanier) tore through their No. 1 match by winning the first five games en route to an 8-2 win. At No. 3, Mountaineers Andrew McKinnon ( Mooresville, N.C./Lake Norman) and Steve Karendal (Kernersville, N.C./Lees-McRae) trailed 3-4 before rattling off five unanswered games for the 8-4 win to clinch the doubles point. ASU seniors Alain Humblet (Montreal, Quebec/DE Mortagne) and Alex Markov (Pernik, Bulgaria/Hawai'i Pacific) followed suit with an 8-4 win in the No. 2 slot to sweep the pairs matches.

Singles play began ominously for the Apps, as King was forced to retire early due to injury, and the Black and Gold's lead in the match evaporated. Humblet regained the Apps lead with a routine win in the No. 3 match. The Mountaineer broke open a 5-0 lead in the opening set and won four games in a row to close out a 6-2, 6-2 victory, handing the Black and Gold a 2-1 edge. After winning his first set 6-2, ASU's Matt Saltgaver (Winter Park, Fla./Winter Park) fell behind 1-4 in the second. The sophomore collected himself and stayed in the set by winning three straight games, eventually forcing a set tiebreaker. Trailing 3-4 in the extra points, Saltgaver tacked on four consecutive points for a 6-2, 7-6(7-4) match victory.

Requiring one more win to clinch the match, Appalachian's needs were answered by Karendal in the No. 5 match, who stole five successive games to close the first set and scored a late break to win his second of a 6-2, 6-4 triumph. In the No. 1 match, ASU's Markov lost the first set by the narrowest of margins and appeared rattled by injury late in his 6-7(5-7), 1-6 loss.

The match concluded with a memorable comeback by Kloc. After dropping five repeated games in a 2-6 opening set, Kloc recovered from a 1-4 deficit in the second to force a seven-point tiebreaker. The Mountaineer held a slim lead throughout the series to take the set, 7-6(7-4), and triggered a 10-point match tiebreaker. Kloc jumped out to an insurmountable 6-1 lead and won the last four points in his lengthy 2-6, 7-6(7-4), (10-3) affair.

By virtue of its 6-2 conference record, Appalachian has clinched a top-five finish in the league standings, guaranteeing the team an opening-round bye in the Southern Conference Tournament to be held April 19-22 in Charleston, S.C. Appalachian State concludes the regular season with a pair of home matches against two of the league's top squads next week. The Apps host Furman on Wednesday at 3 p.m. before the season finale against College of Charleston on Friday at 2:30 p.m.

### Appalachian State Women's Tennis Stumbles against Samford

Despite a lengthy effort to win three singles matches, Appalachian State University women's tennis fell to Southern Conference opponent Samford, 4-3, at ASU Tennis Courts on Saturday. With the loss, the Mountaineers (11-9, 4-5 SoCon) still need one more win to surpass their victories total from last season, while Samford (13-5, 5-4 SoCon) picks up its fourth win to conclude a five-match road trip.

In doubles, Samford's No. 3 pair rallied from a 4-1 deficit to take an 8-5 win, while the Bulldogs' No. 2 tandem converted a 4-0 lead into an 8-4 win to clinch the visitors' doubles point.

ASU juniors Ellie Linsell (Southampton, England/Cheam) and Jennifer Ansari (Greensboro, N.C./Walter Hines Page) staved off the pairs sweep by winning their last four games to notch an 8-4 win in the No. 1 spot, defeating Samford's regionally-ranked duo.

In singles, Samford's No. 3 scored the first win by a 6-3, 6-0 margin, and the Bulldogs' No. 4 player came out on top, 6-4, 6-2, giving Samford a 3-0 lead, one team point from clinching the match.

In the No. 6 position, freshman Gabby Gabriel (Weddington, N.C./Providence Day) got the Mountaineers' momentum going by breaking serve in the first game of each of her sets. In the latter, Gabriel lost twice on serve, but in the tiebreaker, the rookie powered to a 6-0 lead and won her match, 6-4, 7-6(7-2). Shortly thereafter, Samford closed the door on the Appalachian rally by stealing five unanswered games to close out a 6-4, 6-1 win in the No. 2 match and take a 4-1 edge in the team score.

After losing her first set, Linsell collected herself to win five straight games to level the match at a set each. In the decisive set, she exchanged break points with her Samford foe, but the Mountaineer eventually pulled out the 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 win in just over two hours.

In the final match on the courts, junior Kim-Lea Dinh (Maisons-Alfort, France/Lycee Eugene Delacroix) needed 15 minutes to win the first game of her match en route to a 6-1 win in the opening set. After dropping the second set, 2-6, Dinh cruised through four straight games to conclude the match on top, 6-1, 2-6, 6-2.

The Mountaineers conclude their season next week, beginning Monday with a road match against Wofford at 3 p.m. The Apps return to Boone for their final home match when they host Charlotte on Tuesday at 3 p.m. The season concludes on the road at ETSU on Friday.