

ASU Women's Tennis Edged by Charlotte

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In the team's final match on its home courts, Appalachian State University women's tennis fell to non-conference opponent Charlotte, 3-4, at Yonahlossee Racquet Club on Tuesday. The Mountaineers (12-9) suffer their first loss of the season at the Yonahlossee facility, while

the 49ers (15-4) earn their third win over a Southern Conference squad.

Before the match, Appalachian's four graduating seniors were recognized for their contributions to the Mountaineer tennis program. Those honored included Blakeley Bean, Christina Calott, Kim-Lea Dinh and Gisela Fernandez. In doubles play, Charlotte's No. 1 pair won three straight games to take a 7-4 lead before closing out an 8-5 win. Appalachian's No. 2 tandem, Fernandez and Gabriela Celi, trailed at 3-5 but won three in a row for a 6-5 lead. The match went to a tiebreaker, though the 49ers stole the doubles point with a 9-8(7-4) win.

At No. 3, ASU seniors Bean and Dinh rebounded from a 1-4 deficit to tie the match at 7-7 before the match was halted following Charlotte's point-clinching win at No. 2.

In singles, Charlotte's No. 3 player won three straight games to open a 2-5 lead in the first set over Celi. The 49er took five straight games to close a 6-3, 6-1 match and give Charlotte a 2-0 lead in the team scoring.

ASU junior Jennifer Ansari used a late break point to win the first set of her match at No. 2 singles, and in the next set, Ansari took full control in her 7-5, 6-0 win.

Fellow junior Ellie Linsell soon finished her match in the top singles spot, following a long first set by breaking open a 3-0 lead in the second set en route to a 7-5, 6-3 performance. With Appalachian's wins in two of the first three individual matches, the teams went to the bottom half of the lineup deadlocked at 2-2.

Charlotte scored five consecutive games in the opening set of the No. 4 singles match, and the 49er closed the match with three straight games in a 6-2, 6-3 match, putting the 49ers one point from securing the team victory.

Bean kept the Mountaineers alive with a breakout performance in the No. 6 match. The senior won three straight games to take a 5-2 lead in the first set and shutout her 49er foe in the latter set of a 6-4, 6-0 win to tie the match at 3-3.

In the final match on the court, freshman Gabby Gabriel squared off in the No. 5 singles duel and scored three games in a row to take a 5-2 lead in the opening set. Her Charlotte foe recovered to take a big win in the second, leaving the team result hanging on one final set. The decisive set saw Charlotte's Iveta Guneva break serve twice only to have Gabriel break back. With the set level at 4-4, Guneva finally pulled out two-straight games, and Charlotte picked up a 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 win to seal the match.

The Mountaineers conclude their regular season with a visit to ETSU on Friday at 3:30 p.m. Appalachian State then prepares for the 2012 Southern Conference Tournament to be held April 19-22 in Charleston, S.C.