

# SPORTS NEWS



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## Men's Tennis

For Immediate Release: April 14, 2003 • Contact: John Hartrick

### BU steamrolling toward post-season with 3-0 week

Binghamton (15-9) closed out its regular season in brilliant fashion, winning three matches in four days. The Bearcats defeated Bucknell (5-2) before downing America East foes Stony Brook (4-3) and Vermont (7-0) over the weekend. The 15 wins are the most since the 1994-95 Division III squad won 17 en route to an NCAA tournament appearance. With the victories over Stony Brook and Vermont, BU has all but locked up the top seed for the upcoming conference championship. Last week, BU toppled defending champion Hartford, and the team is 3-0 against the top teams in the league.

"We're not just sitting with the number one seed," head coach Michael Starke warned. "We don't care about seeds. All we know is that we're two wins (at the conference championship) away from the crown."

### Victory over Stony Brook an indoor epic

Led by senior **Akshay Rao (New Delhi, India)** and the freshmen tandem of **Edwin Gerard (Queens, N.Y./Edgemont)** and **Brian O'Connor (New Rochelle, N.Y./Iona Prep)**, BU outlasted Stony Brook 4-3 in a Friday night match that went deep into the morning hours. The Bearcats captured the doubles point before the two teams split the six singles matches. More than five hours later, O'Connor's 6-3, 1-6, 6-1 win at fifth singles ended the marathon. Rao scored a surprisingly easy 6-1, 6-1 win at number one, and Gerard provided the most stirring win — a 7-5, 6-7 (3), 7-6 (4) triumph at the third spot. In that match, he was up a set and served for the match before losing a second-set tiebreak. Gerard regained his composure and captured the third-set tiebreak

"Edwin played so well," Starke said. "He was not favored to win that match, and I'm so proud of the way he had enough courage to battle back."

"It was truly a team effort. Six different players secured points for us."

### Resounding win over Vermont caps Senior Day

To put an exclamation point on its case for a top-seed, BU blanked visiting Vermont Sunday on Senior Day. The Bearcats shared center stage with the women's team, and both BU teams posted identical 7-0 wins.

"I challenged our team to make a statement and put our signature on the season and the conference," Starke said. "Winning wasn't good enough. We wanted to show how good we are and how confident we feel."

### Up Next: America East Championship

The Bearcats are now idle until the America East Championship on April 25-27 at Yale. With the top seed, Binghamton would receive a bye into the semifinals, which will be contested on April 26. The official seedings will be determined on April 23.

"Our focus is unshakable. The only way we'll be beaten is by better tennis. But Stony Brook and Hartford have legitimate shots to beat us. We have to stay loose and show up ready to prove to everyone that we deserve the number one seed."

### 2002-03 Schedule/Results (15-9)

#### SEPTEMBER

5 Thu.	ITHACA	W 7-0
7 Sat.-	@ Bloomsburg Duals	no scoring
8 Sun.	w/ Villanova, Lehigh	
17 Tue.	@ Siena	W 7-0
21 Sat.-	@ Cornell Invitational	no scoring
22 Sun.		

#### OCTOBER

6 Sun.	@ Williams	L 2-5
12 Sat.	BUFFALO	W 4-3
25 Fri.-	@ ITA East Regional	no scoring
29 Tue.	hosted by Penn	

#### JANUARY

25 Sat.	@ Army	L 1-6
26 Sun.	+COLGATE	L 2-5

#### FEBRUARY

1 Sat.	^Buffalo	W 5-2
	^Rochester	W 7-0
2 Sun.	^Niagara	W 5-2
	@ St. Bonaventure	L 3-4
8 Sat.	!Niagara	W 5-2
	!Bucknell	W 7-0
9 Sun.	!Marist	L 2-4
21 Fri.	@ Cornell	L 0-7

#### MARCH

9 Sun.	~ St. Louis	L 0-6
11 Tue.	@ Stetson	L 1-6
13 Thu.	~ Rhode Island	W 5-2
21 Fri.	%Manhattan	W 7-0
22 Sat.	@ St. John's	L 1-6
	@ Concordia	W 6-1
29 Sat.	vs. Boston (at Albany)	canc.

#### APRIL

5 Sat.	+HARTFORD	W 5-2
10 Thu.	BUCKNELL	W 5-2
11 Fri.	+STONY BROOK	W 4-3
13 Sun.	VERMONT	W 7-0
25 Fri.-	America East Champ.	9 a.m.
27 Sun.	played at Yale	

+ played at Binghamton Tennis Center  
~ played in Orlando, Fla.  
! played at Cornell  
^ played at St. Bonaventure  
% played at Columbia