

SPORTS NEWS



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Men's Tennis

For Immediate Release: March 24, 2003 • Contact: John Hartrick

Bearcats win two of three matches in NYC

Binghamton (11-9) played three matches in New York City over the weekend, posting wins over Manhattan (7-0) and Division II Concordia (6-1) with a loss to St. John's (6-1) sandwiched in-between.

"It was great to go to the City so we can showcase our kids to their parents and alums," head coach Michael Starke said. "We are still a predominantly New York team, so playing the City is special to us."

On Friday night, BU took on the Jaspers indoors at Columbia University, and captured all nine matches.

"We played with a lot of confidence and intensity throughout the entire lineup," Starke said. "I was happy to see Edwin (Gerard) pull out a match in the third-set tiebreak. We're still trying to get him caught up, and it was a sign of his growing confidence. All the doubles teams looked good too."

On Saturday, the Bearcats played two matches — outdoors in the afternoon at St. John's, and back indoors for an evening match at Concordia. Sophomore No. 1 singles player **Akshay Rao (New Delhi, India)** provided the team's lone point with a 6-2, 6-1 win. The Bearcats had a chance to take the doubles point, but St. John's rallied at the top position, and the disappointment seemed to cascade down the lineup when the singles began.

"We were serving for the match at No. 1 doubles, and then were up 5-4 in the tiebreak," Starke said. "So we had a chance to win the doubles point and didn't. I think we got deflated after that, and didn't step up."

At Concordia, BU dropped just one of nine matches and rolled to the win, despite playing the team's third match in 24 hours.

"We had excellent energy and enthusiasm," Starke said. Akshay had another good match, and Edwin took it to his opponent with a lot of aggression, which was nice to see."

Rao sets record for most wins in season

Sophomore **Akshay Rao (New Delhi, India)** went 3-0 on the weekend to set the school record for singles wins in a season. Rao improved to 26-4 overall, including a sparkling 17-3 dual mark. He broke the record of 23 wins, set by Ron Sussman (1992-95) during his senior season.

"Too often you take things for granted (that he should win), and all the sudden you see that record and you realize how important Akshay is to our program," Starke said. "It's significant."

Up Next: At Albany vs. Boston

The Bearcats will play their final road dual Saturday before closing out the season with four straight home matches. Binghamton will split the difference with America East opponent Boston, as each team will travel to Albany and play outdoors on neutral courts, weather permitting. The match would be the first meeting between the two programs.

2002-03 Schedule/Results (11-9)

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) noon

APRIL

5 Sat. HARTFORD 1 p.m.
11 Fri. STONY BROOK 3:30 p.m.
13 Sun. VERMONT 10 a.m.
16 Wed. BUCKNELL 1 p.m.
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