



Men's Tennis Team Fares Well on First Day of Nationals

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GODFREY – The men's tennis team had its best first day at nationals in three years recording two first-round wins Monday and Coach James Humphrey reports that Juan Bravo, a freshman from Corrientes, Argentina, defeated his opponent as did the doubles team of Neil Berkel, freshman from Troy, Ill. and Tyler Kerley, freshman from Benton, Ill.

The Trailblazers, who defeated Kaskaskia 9-0 in their Region 24 championship match on April 22, are competing this week at the NJCAA Nationals in Plano, Texas.

"Juan Bravo played the very first match of the tournament and made the most of the opportunity defeating his No. 1 singles opponent from Oakton 6-1, 6-3. The courts were playing slow and the balls heavy from humidity, but Juan's serve and forehand were booming," said Humphrey.

"Berkel and Kerley had a fantastic No. 2 doubles match at the end of the day against a veteran team from Scottsdale. Although their opponents were constantly changing tactics to disrupt service games, the team found answers to their opponent's strategies to get the win."

Berkel and Kerley won the first set in a tiebreaker, lost the second set, and were broken in the first and third games of the third set. Coach Humphrey said the team never got down and broke back in answer each time.

"Facing frustration from several questionable calls from the umpire, Berkel and Kerley found a way to close out the last game after four deuces and record the victory," said Humphrey.

At No. 1 doubles, Bravo and Joe Hawkes, a sophomore from Glen Carbon, almost pulled out a great win over a talented team from Meridian. After losing the first set by just one break, they made an adjustment to have Juan start the second set serving on a different side. The move worked and the Trailblazers jumped to a 4-1 lead. After nearly breaking to finish the second, they held again to force a third set.

“Things were even until their opponents got a break in the fourth game,” said Humphrey. “A few shots that went the wrong way were the difference as Bravo and Hawkes went down 6-2 in the last set, but the match elevated their doubles game for the consolation round.”

Results:

- #1S: Juan Bravo def Nick Adamovic (Oakton) 6-1, 6-3
- #2S: Neil Berkel lost to Pedro Rodriguez (USC Lancaster) 6-3, 6-1
- #3S: Joe Hawkes lost to Dave Fosnacht (USC Lancaster) 6-1, 6-4
- #4S: Tyler Kerley lost to Vincenzo Ciccone (ASA) 6-0, 6-0
- #5S: Alex Prusaczyk lost to Juan Estepan (Johnson County) 6-0, 6-1
- #6S: Nic Lancaster lost to Richard Symanski (ABAC) 6-0, 6-1
- #1D: Bravo/Hawkes lost to Bardell/Webb (Meridian) 6-4, 3-6, 6-2
- #2D: Berkel/Kerley def Chaurasia/Webb (Scottsdale) 7-6(4), 4-6, 6-3
- #3D: Lancaster/Prusaczyk lost to Samowitz/Verdi 6-4, 6-2

Visit the tournament website for the latest news at http://www.collin.edu/athletics/national_tourn/information.html.

Watch www.lc.edu/athletics for up-to-date news and scores. To download high-resolution images of the men in action, visit <http://www.flickr.com/photos/lewisandclarkcc>.