



Sophomore Tennis Player Chloe Koons Is ICan Clinic September Female Athlete Of Month For Edwardsville High School

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville senior girls tennis player Chloe Koons had a successful day in the Tigers' big 8-1 win over O'Fallon in a dual meet held last Thursday at the Edwardsville Tennis Center.

Koons won her singles match over Ali Mueller 6-1, 6-1, and also teamed with Morgan Marshall to defeat Gabi Schram and Ava Taylor 8-2. It capped off a good day for Koons on the courts, and she felt she played well overall on the day. For her performance against the Panthers, along with her early success this year, Koons has been named the Riverbender.com female Athlete of the Month at Edwardsville High for September, 2020.

"I think it went well, actually," Koons said in an interview that followed her match against Mueller. "I think it was a different kind of play, but I think I learned a lot through it."

Koons boiled down her performance against Mueller to one very important word: "Patience. And definitely patience," she said with a smile and laugh. "Being patient and picking which shot I should go for, and not rushing that."

Koons also enjoyed playing her doubles match with Marshall, with the duo playing together for the first time.

"Oh, yeah, the doubles match was fun because I got to play with Morgan Marshall," Koons said with another laugh. "That's the first time I played with her before, so it was fun. A fun match."

Koons, who plays for Tigers' head coach Dave Lipe, has a genuine love for the sport, which shows every time she takes the court.

"I have a genuine love of the game of tennis," Koons said. "I enjoy not only playing tennis, but watching tennis. I love hard work, in fact, the more challenging, the more I enjoy it. There is always something new to learn, and a new aspect to improve upon, and to me, that makes it fun and interesting."

Koons feels she's been playing well overall, but with going up against different players every meet, she's finding it hard to compare with both the 2019 campaign. Currently in her second season with the Tigers, she's built up an impressive number of wins, along with being named first team all-Southwestern Conference, and third team All-State.

"Well, it's been different, playing with the different players," Koons said, "so I think it's a little hard to compare from last year against, like, the people in Chicago. But I think what's different is that I'm a lot more relaxed than I was last year, and because of that, I think I am playing better, in a sense."

Along with practically every tennis player in the state, Koons is so very happy to be playing the season at this time, despite all the restrictions and general mayhem of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

"Oh yeah, it's definitely is a blessing," Koons said. "We're really fortunate to be still playing. I can't imagine that. It's terrible."

Given the restrictions on travel set forth by the IHSA during the pandemic, Koons more than likely won't be playing against the players from Chicagoland this year. But she does see a lot of differences on playing against the Chicago players from the players in the Metro-East.

"I think it's a different difficulty, Chicago and over here," Koons said. "I think Chicago, they just hit harder, faster and stronger. But here, I feel like I have to use more strategy. And up there, it's more physical ability. So they're different and difficult in each."

Koons' and the Tigers goals are rather simple as well.

"Goals is just improving a little bit every day," Koons said, "and keeping my focus and just getting stronger."

Koons credits her all of her coaches for the success she's enjoyed so far with the Tigers.

"I have several coaches," Koons said. "Some work with me mostly during the season, and others work with me in the off-season. Dave Lipe, EHS head coach, and the tennis staff/assistant coaches at EHS, Kirk Schlueter, Emily Cimarolli and Jonathan Koons. Outside of EHS, and EHS programs, Jonathan coaches me, and is my main hitting partner, and Phil Trapani has worked with me consistently with me over the years. Last, but not least, my mom, Melissa Koons, who I think is one of my best coaches, mentally."

Koons is also grateful to her parents and others who have guided her along the way to this point in her tennis career.

"I am tremendously to have the support and encouragement of many wonderful people in my life," Koons said. "I have learned such valuable lessons from each of them. They push me to strive for excellence while always reminding me to enjoy the skills and gifts I have when I play. They also have taught me about sportsmanship and kindness, even in competition. There have been many discussions about not allowing emotions to take over on the court, go out, give it your all, and be the very best you can be. I am really grateful for all of them. With that being said, many thanks to my mom and dad, my siblings, and to the three men who have coached me through the years in tennis: Dave

Lipe, Jonathan Koons and Phil Trapani. You are all the best! Also, I can't forget to acknowledge my tennis teammates. Without both the boys and girls who work me out daily, my skills would not have developed."

Koons has been playing for eight years, and loves tennis because of the challenges the game involves.

"I like tennis because of the way it makes me feel," Koons said. "I enjoy the mental and physical challenge. There's something satisfying about it, and it just feels so natural."

Koons would like to continue to play tennis in college, but although she has several schools in mind, hasn't yet decided on what school to go to, or what her major will be. She also has achieved in the classroom, currently ranked in the top 20 of her class, and is currently teaching herself conversational Japanese. She'd like to have a Japanese tutor, and also enjoys hiking and taking walks with her family, baking and art, along with playing card games and ping pong.

Currently, Koons only plays tennis, and feels that being involved in sports at EHS is a very positive experience.

"My involvement with sports has helped develop into the person I am today because the sport tests my mental abilities constantly," Koons said. "Tennis has taught me to control my emotions, and think positively and creatively. Thinking this way during tennis has rubbed off during other times when I'm not playing, like when I'm at school."

Koons feels very privileged to be a member of the Tigers' team, and its warm environment.

"I am really glad to be a part of the tennis program at EHS," Koons said. "It is a strong and encouraging environment, and I love the staff and my fellow players. Edwardsville had a long, strong and proud history of tennis in this area, and even in the state, and I am just really honored to be a small part of that. I'm truly honored to have received the EdGlen Athlete of the Month award for September."

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