

Ben Blake Is iCAN Clinic Male Athlete Of Month For EHS, Says He Will Carry Tennis Passion For Rest Of His Life

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Recently graduated Ben Blake played an integral role in Edwardsville's boys' tennis success this season and capped his career with excellent sectional and state performances.

For his strong boys' tennis career and leadership of the team, Ben Blake is the iCAN Clinic Male Athlete of the Month for Edwardsville High School.

Ben acknowledged he felt a strong responsibility being the lone senior on the Edwardsville High School boys tennis team for the summer 2021 season.

“We had a lot of new guys who weren’t used to high school match play, although they had some experience with tennis in general,” he said. “I tried to make it my job to introduce them to high school tennis and the competitiveness of it and how to respect your opponent and the coach. We have a lot of newer guys and others coming up. Jesse Haltrup is one of the up-and-coming eighth-graders to the program and should have an impact.”

Blake has enormous respect for head coach Dave Lipe, assistant Kirk Schlueter, and another assistant coach Emily Cimarolli.

“I think I have learned more from tennis than anything else in high school,” Blake said. “Dave and Kirk are excellent coaches and they have always pushed me and the team to do our best and push beyond our usual. Tennis has meant a lot to me.”

Ben said one of his intros to tennis was with Cimarolli, and he said Junior Tiger Tennis is simply outstanding and that Cimarolli is also an excellent coach and teaching tennis fundamentals.

Ben will attend Texas Christian University in the fall and major in computer science. He said he will likely obtain a master’s degree, and he hopes to work somewhere in technology, possibly in software and web development.

“I have a passion for technology,” he said.

Ben and his family moved to Edwardsville from Sioux Falls, South Dakota when he was in grade school, and he moved into the Edwardsville School District in eighth grade. Ben’s parents are Jon and Aimee Blake.

Ben said he will likely play tennis the rest of his life, although he won’t play for the TCU boys team.

The Edwardsville tennis star said academics are of the utmost importance to the Tigers' coaches, and he has always strived to make good grades in the classroom.

Most of all, Ben said he was very thankful to have a senior season after a struggle with the COVID-19 Pandemic.

“I am glad we played this year,” he said. “I am going to continue to play tennis I think the rest of my life. I love it and have loved being part of the Edwardsville tennis program.”