



# **Tigers Enter With High Expectations For 2021 Girls Tennis Season, Open This Weekend**

by Brandon Harris

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EDWARDSVILLE – Look at the schedules of other girl’s high school tennis teams and you’ll be hard-pressed to find one as long and competitive as the 2021-22 season for Edwardsville High School. An impressive feat while the Midwest and entire nation are still trying to get back to normal as we deal with COVID-19. Being able to assemble such a season is thanks to the players in Edwardsville’s community, the coaching staff, the parents, and the players.

Edwardsville head coach, Dave Lipe, emphasized how important it is to the staff and players to finally have a full Tiger Tennis season since the pandemic.

Lipe said: “First of all, we are all super excited just to be back in a situation where we can play a full schedule. Our schedule is back to what it was pre-COVID years. We will enter three teams in the Heather Bradshaw, two team in the Southern Illinois Duals, and the girls and their families have been terrific!”

The Tigers were unable to play teams outside of their conference in the previous year because of Covid-19. Due to these travel restraints, Edwardsville is returning two girls who did not lose a match last year. Chloe Koons at #1 singles and Hannah Colbert at #2 singles and #1 doubles. Whether the two leaders and star players play singles or doubles in this upcoming season is up in the air. The first struggle of the year has been a week’s worth of canceled practices while Edwardsville experienced unplayable temperatures and rain.

Another one of the coaches’ struggles will be designating a lineup behind Koons and Colbert. According to Lipe, “We have so many girls who have worked hard so many girls who are talented, and so many girls who want to be in the top 6.” The four remaining varsity spots will be earned in the days leading up to the first matches of the season.

One thing to highlight is the amount of travel for the Tiger’s tennis team. “We are looking forward to safely traveling to Chicago in two weekends where we will open up at the New Trier Invitational.” A tournament the girls’ team has never won. Rather than be negative towards results in past years, Lipe thinks it’s fantastic. On the heels of an undefeated tennis season, he feels the losses were needed and are a key to success. “We need to see someone better than us because we are not the best tennis players in the world. There are girls out there who can beat us.” With seeing better competition, the motivation is the girls will see the next level, work towards it, and achieve wonderful things.

As for who will be the top challenge in the conference for the Tigers? “O’Fallon and Belleville East will be tough rivals for us. Belleville West will be solid, the Alton Redbirds will return improved, but O’Fallon and Belleville East will be tough for us, said Lipe.

The Tigers begin their schedule on the road; with matches starting on August 27th & 28th at the New Trier Invitational and September 1 against St. Joseph’s Academy. To catch the season home-opener, visit the courts at Edwardsville High School on September 3rd and 4th as they host the Heather Bradshaw Invitational!