



Monica Wendle Leaves Legacy As Marquette Catholic High School Student- Athlete, Her Next Quest Is At LCCC

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - Marquette Catholic student-athlete Monica Wendle was recently honored with the prestigious Illinois State Scholar award at her school. At the conclusion of the fall, Monica finished higher than any other area player in the girls' state tennis tournament and ended up all-state - another tremendous achievement.

Since her all-state accolade, Monica has made a choice of school and she will stay home at Lewis and Clark Community College and play on the women's tennis squad.

"I am planning on going to Lewis and Clark to study education so I can become a teacher," she said. "I am also interested in communications of some sort."

Monica has enormous respect for her two high school girls tennis coaches - Mike Walters and Kathy Claywell.

"Coach Mike Walters and Coach Kathy Claywell helped me become the tennis player I am," she said. "Their advice, tips, and encouragement help me play the best possible game I can. I am so blessed to have had such awesome coaches and will be forever grateful for their time and energy they poured into our tennis seasons."

Coach Walters said he couldn't be more proud of Monica for her achievements and the person she has become over the years.

"I am proud of Monica not just because of her accomplishments, but the fact that so many players, coaches, and parents have told me that Monica was the nicest player they had ever met," he said. "She exceeded anything I thought she could do. When she upset the girl that was the 9-16 seed, she played better than she had all year. If she had played like that all year, she would have been undefeated going into state."

Monica recalled this about her fall season in tennis:

"I got second at sectionals. I am so blessed and thankful to have made it to state. I am even more humbled that I won four matches at state. One of my favorite moments of state was playing my first match of the second day. I was playing a girl who was seeded 16th place in the state overall. My coach thought I would be lucky to get one game off her. Somehow, I managed to win the first set, and she won the second. So, we went into a tie break and it was tied 5-5.

"I looked up to serve the ball and I drop the ball amazed at what I see in the sky. A rainbow, directly up in the sky! I say 'look a rainbow!' Both teams' parents and coaches looked up and are amazed at this sight so early in the morning! I loved how that reminded us of how lighthearted the game can be where you can pause in the intense moments of the game (tied in a tiebreak) to acknowledge God's beautiful creation."

Monica continued and said: "I got the next 5 points, winning the tiebreak (10-5) and the set overall. I give all glory to God because my coach and parents say that was the best they had ever seen me play. I finished in the top 9-12th place bracket. I am blessed that God gave me the strength and ability to play tennis and to have met amazing people in my high school tennis journey. I've seen many matches where it was doubtful that I would win and did. But, whether I won or lost, I am thankful to say "all glory to God!"

Monica closed by saying: "I couldn't have advanced too far in tennis without my faith, parents, family, and friends' support and love."

