

Alton High Boys Tennis Has Several Solid Players Back For Spring

by Brandon Harris
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ALTON – Alton High School will have several solid players back for the 2022 spring tennis season and head coach Jesse Macias says his team is looking good and is ready to compete.

“First impression going into the season is we look like a team that worked hard in the off-season,” Macias said. ”The players are hitting the ball well, their conditioning is good, and they all have gotten bigger and stronger. Last year we had a team of underclassmen. This year we still don’t have any seniors, but we have a group of guys with experience who look ready to compete.”

It is exciting for Alton to be returning experienced players without any seniors in their lineup. But the return to a full-length schedule for the first time since COVID-19 is also welcomed.

“Part of what has been exciting about the start of the season is not having covid restrictions,” Coach Macias said. "Last year the coaches were in masks and teams could not travel, so our schedule was limited to certain opponents. All good vibes this year with the restrictions gone!"

As a head coach, Macias will be facing a good problem this year - most players in his lineup are good enough to compete against the next one. Xavier Carter and Parker Mayhew were one and two for the 2021 season and Macias does not think a lot will change.

“Xavier and Parker should be our top two this year, but that could change, and that is not a bad thing — any player could start the year anywhere in the lineup,” said Macias. “Our top eight players are going to push each other all year. Even after a week, I can see how they are helping each other get better every day. Phil Trapani, Christian Freeman, John Schwank, and James Humphrey are assisting this year and they will be a key to our success too.”

As for the top players to look out for this Redbird season, Macias had high praise for multiple players. “I’m excited about the whole team. Nate Bartlett and James McKeever were number five and eight last year. They both took big jumps with their performance attitudes about competing. Luke Boyd is becoming a leader and was a solid number three last year, so we are excited about him.

"The two players that have been the best are Xavier Carter and Parker Mayhew. Junior Xavier was our number one but had some parts in his game holding him back. He has put time into improving everything and he is always mentally tough. Sophomore Parker Mayhew played tournaments in the off-season and probably spent more time on the courts than anyone. His serves, groundstrokes, and volleys are fantastic, and he is playing at a high level right now.”