



Tigers Boys Tennis Team Marches To State With Six Qualifiers

by Brandon Harris
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EDWARDSVILLE - Whether it is their nationally recognized facility, Southwestern Conference Titles, IHSA Sectional Titles, or the players and coaches, “championship” is the only word to describe the history and culture of Edwardsville Tiger Tennis. Fresh off their 31st Conference victory and 24th Sectionals win, the Tiger tennis team is sending all six entries to the state tournament for the first time since 2016.



"I'm super proud of all of our kids," said head coach Dave Lipe. Jesse Hatrup placed fourth in singles, Colton Hulme came in third, Jace Ackerman and Sam Motley finished second place in doubles, and Jade Dynamic and Michael Karibian winning their doubles flight.

Due to the strong play from all six players, the Tigers won their 24th Sectional Title with 31 points.

The Tiger Tennis team is at an impressive level as they march into the IHSA State Tournament. After their Sectional win and qualifying all six entries for the first time since 2016, Lipe believes his young team is ready for their best challenge in Chicago. "The kids are peaking at the right time, and expect them to play even better next weekend at the State Tournament in Chicago."

With Hatrup placing fourth in two singles and Hulme placing third at one singles, the young players encountered good, experienced competition. "I thought our singles played very well and lost to a couple of seniors who played like they had more experience," Lipe said, then gave positive recognition to Bellville East and O'Fallon High School's efforts. "Credit to East and O'Fallon in singles for getting to the final, but I thought the East and O'Fallon players played well in all of their spots."

Tiger singles players had a good tournament, but according to Lipe, "I thought our doubles played their best tennis of the year for sure. The biggest surprise of the tournament was our number two doubles team, who was the fifth seed, getting to the final. They lost in the final 6-4, 6-3. They got the most games off the eventual champions. On paper, their result was the biggest surprise, but qualifying six players is the biggest story from our perspective." High praise from a coach who has seen many great moments in Tiger Tennis history.

"I think the second biggest story is our kids are playing well right now." Lipe continued, "We are looking forward to continuing our level play, and hopefully, we can find another level next weekend. That is our goal now, play our best tennis of the year in Chicago on Thursday morning. It will be tough, but that is what we are going to try to do."



Final Team Scores from Sectionals:

1. Edwardsville First - 31 points
2. East – 23 points
3. O’Fallon – 20 points
4. Alton – 8 points
5. West/Collinsville/Quincy – 4 points
6. Decatur McArthur/Granite City – 0 points 8th place

Find upcoming matchups and results from the ISHA State Tournament by following the link below.

<https://www.ihsa.org/Sports-Activities/Boys-Tennis>



