

Trailblazers Win Region Championship and Trip to Nationals

May 4 2015 11:38 AM



GODFREY – The Lewis and Clark Community College men's tennis team won the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I Region 24 Championship against Kaskaskia 5-4 on April 17 and earned a repeat trip to the National Championship tournament May 11-15 in Plano, Texas.

“The men played well,” said first-year head coach Chris Logan. “I wasn’t sure what to expect because this was the first time we faced Kaskaskia this season. I was proud of the

way the men competed and used their heads. We knew we needed to win five out of the nine points to qualify, and that's exactly what we did. It was a complete team effort and our depth proved to be the difference."

In doubles action, No. 1 team of sophomores Brian Gebben, of Alton, and Lucas Birk, of Belleville, lost 8-2. No. 2 Elliott Miller, of St. Charles, Missouri and Adam Ruckman, of Alton, won 9-7, and No. 3 Cody Taplin and Conner Melton, both of Troy, won 8-2.

In singles, No. 1 Taplin lost his match 6-1, 6-3. No. 2 Miller and No. 3 Gebben won their first sets, dropped their second sets and lost the final in close tiebreak games. Miller lost 0-6, 6-4, 10(7), and Gebben lost 1-6, 6-3, 10(7). No. 4 Ruckman won 6-0, 6-2, No. 5 Birk won 6-0, 6-0 and No. 6 Melton won 6-1, 6-2.

"We have one match before we head to nationals and a lot of practice ahead of us," Coach Logan said. "At this point the fun can begin. I want the men to enjoy the rest of their season, especially the sophomore players. We played a lot of division II schools that really beat us up, but the important thing to remember is that the experiences made us better and we were able to win the match that really mattered. We will be practicing to stay sharp and work on areas that need improvement before we head to Texas. I'm very excited to see what these guys can do on a big stage. They've earned it."

Match results from the NJCAA D-I Region 24 Championships between Lewis and Clark Community College (LC) and Kaskaskia (K) are:

1D: Ben Urshan/Garrett Baysinger (KC) def. Brian Gebben/Lucas Birk (LC) 8-2
2D: Elliott Miller/Adam Ruckman (LC) def. Blake Gocey/Jacob Casner (KC) 9-7
3D: Cody Taplin/Conner Melton (LC) def. Tony Hill/Nathan Flatt (KC) 8-2
1S: Ben Urshan (KC) def. Cody Taplin (LC) 6-1, 6-3
2S: Jacob Casner (KC) def. Elliott Miller (LC) 0-6, 6-4, 10(7)
3S: Garrett Baysinger (KC) def. Brian Gebben (LC) 1-6, 6-3, 10(7)
4S: Adam Ruckman (LC) def. Blake Gocey (KC) 6-0, 6-2
5S: Lucas Birk (LC) def. Nathan Flatt (KC) 6-0, 6-0
6S: Connor Melton (LC) def. Tony Hill (KC) 6-1, 6-2

For more information on L&C Athletics visit www.lc.edu/athletics.