



HARFORD WOMEN'S TENNIS UNDEFEATED

BEL AIR, Md.—The Harford women's tennis team is on track to repeat its feat from one year ago, when it posted a perfect, 10-0 season. After opening the 2009 season with an 8-1 win at Hagerstown on September 14, the Fighting Owls (4-0, 2-0 MDJUCO) notched three more dual match victories in the last two weeks, in addition to claiming the Harford Invitational and Wilson/ITA Northeast Regional Championship titles.

Harford extended its unbeaten streak to 14 straight matches over the course of two years as it notched a 9-0 victory against Mercer at home on September 18, a 9-0 win at Montgomery College-Rockville on September 22 and an 8-1 decision at Mercer on September 24. Harford's last dual meet loss dates back to October 23, 2007 when they fell to Cecil, 6-3.

In the midst of their dual match dominance, the Owls also claimed the Harford Invitational Tournament title, which was held September 19-20 as well as the Wilson/ITA Northeast Regional Championship title, which was held from September 25-27 at Mercer. The win at the Harford Invite marks the first time in the history of the tournament that the Owls have won their own tournament and the ITA tournament win makes Harford two-time, back-to-back champs after claiming its first title in 2008.

In three dual matches, Harford would drop just five total sets and one match, with sophomore Courtney Brewer (Street, Md./North Harford) accounting for three of the sets and the match loss, at No. 3 singles last Thursday at Mercer.

Brewer also struggled in her singles matches during the Harford Invite, edging out her opponent 9-8 with an 8-6 outcome in the tiebreak in the play-in round, and falling in the quarterfinals, 8-2. Brewer did see success on the team level, however, as she paired with sophomore Kate Tiburzi (Fallston, Md./Fallston) to claim the No. 2 doubles title at the Harford tournament.

After suffering two individual losses within a week, Brewer, who was the No. 1 seed, bounced back at the ITA regionals, taking the Flight B singles title. Brewer earned a bye in the first round before defeating Onondaga's Anna Nguyen and Teresa Woloszyn in the round of 16 and quarterfinal round, respectively. The semifinals saw the sophomore pitted against the No. 6 seed, Gloucester's Ali Crozier, who Brewer easily dispatched, 6-1, 6-4 to advance to the final. There she met the No. 2 seed, another Roadrunner, Sara Wilkins. Brewer handily defeated her opponent in the first set, 6-3, but Wilkins would force a tiebreak in the second set and push the standard seven-point affair to nine, as Brewer notched the 9-7 decision to win the second set and the match, 7-6.

Tiburzi, Brewer's doubles partner at the Harford Invite, would also have success at the individual level of that tournament, making it to the final of the No. 2 singles draw, but falling to Brookdale's Sam Miller, 6-3, 7-6 (9-7), while Harford players claimed three other titles at the tournament.

Sophomore Kelsey Strine (Abingdon, Md./Edgewood) grabbed the No. 4 singles title, and sophomore Megan Heagy (Fallston, Md./Fallston/Towson) won at No. 6 singles and teamed with freshman Julie Vuncannon (Aberdeen, Md./Aberdeen) to notch the No. 3 doubles title.

The Heagy/Vuncannon duo, continued its success as the No. 1 seed at the ITA tournament, advancing to the quarterfinals with a bye before defeating Olga Kanevskava and Crystal Stanzione from Brookdale, 8-3 to make it to the semifinals. There, Heagy and Vuncannon met sophomores Agnes Burke (Havre de Grace, Md./Havre de Grace) and Strine, who also took a bye into the quarterfinals, where they downed Hagerstown's Wendy Lucas and Jill Watson, 8-2. The all-Harford semifinal saw Heagy and Vuncannon come out victorious, 8-5, before falling to Gloucester's Courtney Addis and Amanda Berry, 6-4, 3-6, 12-10 in the super-tiebreaker during the final.

Heagy also made it to the finals of Flight C singles, and met another Harford teammate along the way. After downing Onondaga's Alexis Ashline, 6-1, 6-0 in the round of 16, Heagy came up against freshman Katie Sampayo (Fallston, Md./Fallston), who got to the quarterfinals by defeating Gloucester's Lindsay Paulson, 6-4, 4-6, 11-9 in the super tiebreaker. Sampayo, the No. 2 seed, claimed the first set, 7-6 and Heagy, the No. 5 seed knotted the match with a 6-4 second set win before upsetting Sampayo, 9-7 in the super tiebreaker. Heagy's semifinal match against MC-Rockville's Natalie Roche would also go three sets, with Heagy coming out victorious, 7-5, 0-6, 6-4 in the super tiebreaker. Heagy would fall in straight sets in the final however, as Brookdale's Natalie DeSabato earned the 6-1, 6-3 win.

The doubles team of sophomore Ashley Sherinsky (Fallston, Md./Fallston) and Tiburzi were the only other finalists for the Owls, as they made it to the Flight A doubles championship match. After a bye to get to the round of 16, the pair blanked Onondaga's Gloria Grimaldi and Nguyen, 8-0, edged Gloucester's Christina Bell and Crozier, 9-7 and downed Mercer's Emily Dow and Rebecca Wolf, 8-6 to advance to the final. There, the teammates faced ASA's Simona Mrazova and Soizette Simmons, falling 6-1, 6-4.

Strine was the only other semifinalist for Harford, falling in the Flight B singles draw to Gloucester's Sara Wilkins, 6-2, 6-3. Strine, the No. 5 seed, defeated MC-Rockville's Aleenia Nakamura, 6-1, 6-1 in the round of 16, before downing Brookdale's Michelle Chengy, 6-3, 6-4 in the quarterfinals to advance to the semifinal match against the No. 2 seed.

The Fighting Owls return to action on Friday, October 2 when they host MC-Rockville at 3:30 p.m. and look to extend their unbeaten to streak to five matches in 2009.