

# Tennis Season In Full “Swing”

*-The Balding Eagle, April 7-*

With tennis season kicking off last month, we wanted to do season updates this week for our girls’ and boys’ teams.

After helping start the program at GCS last spring, our coaches and players are glad to be back for a second campaign. The dynamic duo of Talor Troyer and Scott Phillips is once again working hard with the players to get them into shape, sharpen skills, and establish seeding for upcoming matches. So far, both teams have traveled to Winona High School and Heritage Academy.

Because this is still a relatively new sport for many of our players, there is yet some work to do on things like technique and serving. But at the same time, both coaches credit the players for working hard to maximize each workout and improve as much as possible.

In terms of other challenges facing the team so far, Coach Phillips also mentioned getting time on the courts. GCS plays on the Ivy Park courts, as do several other local groups. The courts are therefore unavailable for many of our team’s practice days, so the teams are forced to work on one court at Lake Tiak O’Khata rather than four courts at Ivy. Last but not least, as with any other spring sport, weather can really be a consistent problem.

One thing that coaches and players have all identified as a strength so far has been team chemistry. They seem to really like each other, they like being together, and they make it easy for a coach to want to be with them too.

When asked about keys to success between now and the end of the season, Coach Phillips remarked, “Our goals this year have been to learn the game, increase our interest in tennis, and get better than we were when we started. We are playing teams with a lot more experience playing tennis than we have, so we want to get closer to our competition. We want to see that it is possible for us to keep getting better and arrive at a place where we can match these other teams in talent.”

As far as standout players, Senior Aspen Harris and Sophomore Noah Phillips come to mind. Coach Troyer noted both as leaders at this point in overall skill.

Both coaches glowed about their teams in terms of attitude and work ethic. “This team has great effort and work ethic,” said Coach Phillips. “They will do anything they are asked for as long as they are asked to do it. They always work hard. They also have a great attitude whenever we are practicing or competing.”

All in all, the buzz around the program has been nothing if not positive, hard work is taking place every workout, and both coaches are having a great time with both teams.

As far as improvement in individual players, Coach Phillips identified Junior Bailey Troyer as someone who has come a long way since early March. He added, “Bailey began the season new to tennis and having trouble just making contact between the strings and the ball. Now she has a powerful and natural stroke that just needs to grow more consistent.”

Last but not least, when asked about what has to happen for our teams to reach their full potential by the end of the year, Coach Phillips mentioned how the weather has to cooperate, a few injuries need to heal, and a couple of players have to gain confidence in their abilities.

Junior Nick Culwell said, “It’s been a real great year. A lot of us who are starting out have learned a lot from our coaches about what we need to do in terms of tennis. We have also made a lot of connections with opponents and have made some new friends.”

Next week, GCS will host Winona High School and Winston Academy in what will be the final week of play for both squads.

Be sure to check the schedule on the Sports tab on our website or just call the front office for information. Don’t miss out on seeing our tennis teams before the season is over. Go, Eagles!