

SPORTS NEWS



Binghamton University • Office of Sports Information

West Gym • P.O. Box 6000 • Binghamton, N.Y. 13902-6000

Phone: 607-777-6800 • Fax: 607-777-4597

Web: <http://athletics.binghamton.edu>

Men's Tennis

For Immediate Release: February 3, 2003 • Contact: John Hartrick

Bearcats win three of four at St. Bonaventure Duals

Binghamton played four matches in a two-day span, and notched three wins at the St. Bonaventure Duals. The Bearcats topped Buffalo, Rochester and Niagara before falling to the host Bonnies in their final match.

"We feel good about our performance," BU head coach Michael Starke said. "We fought to the bitter end, and showed some fire."

After rolling to relatively easy wins in the team's first three matches, BU battled St. Bonaventure in Sunday's afternoon match, and absorbed a narrow defeat. The Bonnies won four of the five singles matches – including two that went to a third-set super-tiebreak (10 points). The Bearcats captured the lone doubles match to secure two points and make the final score 4-3.

Rao rolls to perfect weekend

Sophomore sensation **Akshay Rao (New Delhi, India)** continued his winning ways with a 4-0 performance at the duals. Rao posted straight set wins against Buffalo, Rochester and Niagara, and battled for a three-set victory against St. Bonaventure. That match went to a super tiebreak to determine the third set, and Rao prevailed 10-3.

"Akshay played excellent," Starke said. "They were the best players in the tournament, and they traded blows like heavyweight fighters. Akshay was huge in the tiebreak. He hit some incredible winners."

Rao, ranked No. 15 in the Northeast Region after the fall season, raised his record to 18-2 overall, 9-1 in duals. He is 32-7 since joining the program last January.

Freshman O'Connor steps up at third singles

Freshman **Brian O'Connor (New Rochelle, N.Y./Iona Prep)**, who typically plays fourth or fifth singles, was bumped up to the third spot to replace senior **Brad Sherwood (Bronx, N.Y./Fordham Prep)**, who is nursing an abdominal injury.

O'Connor's only defeat was a three-set 12-10 loss against St. Bonaventure in the day's most exciting match. He battled back from one set down to win the second-set tiebreak, and then in the super tiebreak, earned two match points before succumbing. On Saturday, O'Connor scored a 6-3, 3-6, 10-5 win against Buffalo. He won in straight sets over Niagara and Rochester, and is now 8-6 for the year, including a 6-4 mark in duals.

Up Next: Three matches at Cornell

The Bearcats will play three matches at the Reis Tennis Center in Ithaca next weekend, including another tilt against Niagara.

2002-03 Schedule/Results (6-4)

SEPTEMBER

| | | |
|----------|------------------------|--------------|
| 5 Thu. | ITHACA | W 7-0 |
| 7 Sat.- | @ Bloomsburg Duals | no scoring |
| 8 Sun. | w/ Villanova, Lehigh | |
| 17 Tue. | @ Siena | W 7-0 |
| 21 Sat.- | @ Cornell Invitational | no scoring |
| 22 Sun. | | |

OCTOBER

| | | |
|----------|---------------------|--------------|
| 6 Sun. | @ Williams | L 2-5 |
| 12 Sat. | BUFFALO | W 4-3 |
| 25 Fri.- | @ ITA East Regional | no scoring |
| 29 Tue. | hosted by Penn | |

JANUARY

| | | |
|---------|-----------------|--------------|
| 25 Sat. | @ Army | L 1-6 |
| 26 Sun. | +COLGATE | L 2-5 |

FEBRUARY

| | | |
|---------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 Sat. | ^Buffalo | W 5-2 |
| | ^Rochester | W 7-0 |
| 2 Sun. | ^Niagara | W 5-2 |
| | @ St. Bonaventure | L 3-4 |
| 8 Sat. | !Niagara | 12:30 p.m. |
| | !Bucknell | 6:30 p.m. |
| 9 Sun. | !Marist | 12:30 p.m. |
| 21 Fri. | @ Cornell | 1 p.m. |

MARCH

| | | |
|---------|----------------|-----------|
| 9 Sun. | ~ St. Louis | noon |
| 11 Tue. | @ Stetson | 2:30 p.m. |
| 12 Wed. | ~ Buffalo | 8 a.m. |
| 13 Thu. | ~ Rhode Island | noon |
| 21 Fri. | @ Manhattan | 3 p.m. |
| 22 Sat. | @ Concordia | 8 p.m. |

APRIL

| | | |
|----------|---------------------|------------------|
| 5 Sat. | HARTFORD | 1 p.m. |
| 11 Fri. | STONY BROOK | 3:30 p.m. |
| 13 Sun. | VERMONT | 10 a.m. |
| 16 Wed. | BUCKNELL | 1 p.m. |
| 25 Fri.- | America East Champ. | 9 a.m. |
| 27 Sun. | played at Yale | |

+ played indoors at Binghamton Tennis Center

~ played in Orlando, Fla.

! played at Cornell

^ played at St. Bonaventure