

# SPORTS NEWS



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## Men's Tennis

For Immediate Release: March 18, 2003 • Contact: John Hartrick

### Bearcats rally to win final match of spring trip

Binghamton (9-8) played three matches in Orlando, Fla., dropping the first two matches to St. Louis (6-0) and Stetson (6-1) before finishing up with a 5-2 victory over Rhode Island.

"We had a good trip," head coach Michael Starke said. "We faced some stiff competition, spent a lot of time on the tennis court and hit a lot of tennis balls. As a result, I expect our team to enter the spring season of conference play playing very sharp and with a lot of enthusiasm. Our record may not indicate it, but we feel good about where we're headed."

### Doubles lineup solidified heading into home stretch

With the team's final four weeks of dual competition upcoming, Starke used the spring trip to hone in on the starting doubles combinations. Already a fixture at the top spot are sophomore **Akshay Rao (New Delhi, India)** and senior **Brad Sherwood (Bronx, N.Y./Fordham Prep)**, who are 6-3 in duals this year. Set to take over at second doubles are senior **Brad Davidoff (Roslyn, N.Y.)** and junior **Steve Spencer (Plantation, Fla./Nova)**. Freshman **Edwin Gerard (Queens, N.Y./Edgemont)** and sophomore **Krishna Vallabhaneni (Lagrangeville, N.Y./Arlington)** will play at the third spot. Vallabhaneni is 10-6 in doubles duals this year, and is 20-12 in his collegiate career.

"We had a chance to juggle the doubles lineup down in Florida, and feel we found the strongest combinations possible," Starke said.

### Rao bounces back with two wins

Sophomore **Akshay Rao (New Delhi, India)** rebounded from rare back-to-back singles defeats (Cornell and St. Louis) to win his final two matches of the spring break. Rao provided BU's lone point against Stetson, winning 6-3, 5-7, 10-7. He then scored a 6-2, 6-1 victory against Rhode Island to improve to 23-4 overall this season — 14-3 in duals.

"After a flat performance against St. Louis, Akshay has regained the form that we've all become familiar with," Starke said. "He's also beginning to pick up his doubles play as well. Akshay will have to play well for us to succeed."

### Freshman Gerard settling in at third singles spot

Freshman **Edwin Gerard (Queens, N.Y./Edgemont)** picked up his first collegiate win during the spring trip — a 6-2, 6-1 victory against Rhode Island. Gerard, who joined the team in January but wasn't cleared to compete until recently, gives the team a big boost in the middle of the lineup.

"Edwin certainly suffered not being able to compete in our first nine matches," Starke said. "He's just now finding his dual match play and groove. The spring trip was great for Edwin."

### Up Next:

The Bearcats travel to New York City for three matches this weekend, including a match against a strong St. John's program.

"It's no longer the time of year to worry about how you're playing, but to gain wins" Starke said. "I expect us to play well. It's time to perform."

### 2002-03 Schedule/Results (9-8)

#### 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 W 5-2  
!Bucknell W 7-0  
9 Sun. !Marist L 2-4  
21 Fri. @ Cornell L 0-7

#### MARCH

9 Sun. ~ St. Louis L 0-6  
11 Tue. @ Stetson L 1-6  
13 Thu. ~ Rhode Island W 5-2  
21 Fri. %Manhattan 8:30 p.m.  
22 Sat. @ St. John's noon  
@ Concordia 8 p.m.  
29 Sat. vs. Boston (at Albany) noon

#### 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 at Binghamton Tennis Center  
~ played in Orlando, Fla.  
! played at Cornell  
^ played at St. Bonaventure  
% played at Columbia