

# Boys tennis finishes fourth at Edwardsville

The team has high hopes for this year's varsity line up

by Helen Fagan

The New Trier boy's tennis team has their eyes set on State Finals after placing fourth in a multi-state tournament on April 1 and 2.

The fourth-seeded Varsity boys competed at the Tiger Invitational in Edwardsville, IL. The tournament hosted 46 teams in 12 locations.

Senior captain Tom Bickel called his opponents "solid competition" and the tournament is seen as one of the most competitive in the region.

The players are proud of their performance at their first tournament of the season. Senior Alex Dudek said, "Just based on our first tournament last week, I think that the team is really looking great, perhaps even better than last year."

Last year's team finished strongly at state, with senior Thomas Hanley and juniors Mahir Wagh, Scott Bickel, Tom Bickel, Jeffrey Chen and Wyatt Mayer leading the team to a third place finish.



Boys tennis huddles up before their tournament in Edwardsville | Wash

Hanley was the only senior in last year's state lineup, and the team believes its new members will be able to fill his spot nicely.

Coach James Wright, who coaches girl's tennis and volunteers with the boy's team, said, "We have at least two impactful newcomers in senior Michal Kusznerko and freshman Jake Zipoli who will be playing near the top of the lineup."

Bickel also has high hopes for the rookies. He said, "They each

had exceptional tryouts and they are playing as high as number one doubles so far."

Though the hole in the lineup has been handled, the team is still feeling the void of the players they lost.

"The seniors that left last year were more of a loss socially because they were all so outgoing and engaged," Bickel said.

Despite this, the team is adjusting to their new dynamic. Senior Wyatt Mayer said, "It provides great

opportunity for leadership. The senior concentration also makes it feel a lot closer knit."

Seniors make up 10 of the 16 players on the team. Their eyes are set especially on state this year as Wright said they "all want to end their high school careers on a high note."

Those who may not make the state lineup are still excited for the season. Dudek said he wants "to have fun both on and off the court with the team. I think that playing in state would be a really awesome experience, but I'm just as happy to cheer on the team from the sidelines."

Bickel, who is hoping to make a fourth appearance at state, said he loves having the support of his teammates. "It creates a pretty fun atmosphere when you got the whole squad leaning on the fence and becoming part of the long, scrappy rallies."

The loss of competitive seniors from other teams means NT has a shot at taking the state trophy from Hinsdale, who has won the title every year since 2012.

Wright said, "It should be an open team race now that Hinsdale Central finally graduated their historic

senior class, and we like our chances."

The improving health of returning players should also help the squad. Bickel said, "My twin brother Scott's right wrist is healthy this year. Having our best player miss almost all of last year really cost us."

Though it seems like everything is falling into place for the team, the road to state will not be easy.

Mayer said that duel matches against Highland Park on April 19 and Hinsdale Central on April 30 will be especially challenging.

Bickel hopes that the desire to win it all will challenge the team. "Although we are all excited to hopefully live up to the expectations of winning state, it puts big red targets on our backs during pretty much every match. Every team wants to take us out. We have to keep our cool and not get too far ahead of ourselves."

The squad is looking to dominate the competition one match at a time. Mayer said that a team goal is to have "an undefeated duel match season."

Last week's tournament showed that the Trevians will do whatever they can to get to the State Finals. Bickel said, "All we know is that it's time to return the trophy back to Winnetka!"

## Softball shut out

The team pulled together to slaughter the competition

by Kate Holly

On Tuesday, April 5, the varsity girls softball team beat Maine West 10-0 at Duke Child's Softball Field.

The team won by the slaughter rule, also known as the mercy rule, in the 5th inning.

Senior Shayle Areson said, "We had a total of 13 hits, one error, and ten runs. We all came ready to hit the ball, and we did."

The varsity team is made up of 15 girls: one sophomore, six juniors, and eight seniors. Seniors Shayle Arenson, Ellie Head, and Cindy Secaras are the team captains this year.

Junior infielder Sophia Holt said that the cold weather Tuesday night presented a challenge. "[The cold] makes throwing the ball and hitting more painful, but our team managed to work through it really well. We were very focused on the field, and there was great energy on the bench."

Despite the weather, the girls managed to dominate. Secaras was pleased with how the team performed.

"Overall, I think we played extremely well. Our defense was solid and our hitting was exceptional. We strung our hits together very nicely and played as a cohesive group throughout the whole game."

Head coach John Cadwell, alongside assistant coaches Dave Snyder and Alan Pavelik, said that he hoped the girls walk onto the field with a sense of pride and determination to achieve the goals they had established for themselves.

Junior infielder Gillian Gossard followed that sentiment, saying, "My expectations were that no matter the team we play, I should always play my hardest."

Cadwell also mentioned the importance of team dynamic. "On the varsity level, there's always interest in wins and losses. But for us at this point in the season, it's about team play and team dynamic, which will serve us well for the whole year."

With the season beginning at the end of February and practice six days a week, the girls have hardly had any

breaks. They typically play two to three games during the school week, and on Saturdays they normally have a double header), totaling close to five games a week.

Even during spring break, the team was working hard and competing. They left Saturday morning for a trip to Peoria and returned Tuesday night. The team had practice every day and played four games against teams ranked in the top ten of the state.

Cadwell admitted that although the team got off to a rocky start over break, the girls have really started to come together as a team.

"The reason we take the spring trip is to work on team chemistry, bonding, and pulling together this group of athletes so they really start to care about each other and think about others on the team," Cadwell said. "I think that has started to kick in now, and the girls are feeling really close to each other."

Head agreed with Cadwell, as she expressed her hopes on how her teammates would remember her after she graduates:

"I hope my teammates remember me as a great teammate and leader who showed her dedication to the team through hard work."

According to Cadwell, the team plays a very competitive schedule. Their record is an even four wins to four losses after playing some of the most challenging schools in the state.

Last year, the team made it to the sectional championship, but lost 6-4 against Stevenson. In order to get back to the sectional championship game, Cadwell said that the girls need to continue to be supportive and put in the extra effort necessary to maintain their success.

"It's going to require some resilience on their part because we're going to face some teams that are heavily favored and talented, but I think we can compete with them," Cadwell said.

Junior pitcher Alicia Bagan has high expectations for the rest of their season. "Already we have made such an improvement since we started this season and we are really starting to work as a team. Our team has the motivation to work hard and the determination to be the best we can be. We won't stop working until we make it to the top."



Junior Kami Grochowski throws the ball during the March 9 match against Glenbrook North | Varsity Views

## Girls Water Polo team seeks improvement in the pool

The team continues to fight despite a couple recent losses

by Emily Challenger

After a small spring-break hiatus, the girls water polo team left no room for relaxation as they quickly jumped back into action.

On Friday, April 1, the girls had their first major loss against Fenwick High School, a team ranked in the top three in the state. The girls hadn't played the Friars since last year. The Trevians walked into the Friday game with confidence and a positive attitude as they hoped to beat their rival.

Things were looking up for the Trevians as they scored two goals in the first quarter of the game. Junior Emma Valdisser explained, "They are one of the best teams in the state, and they are a team we really want to beat."

Not only did the girls want to win the game, but this was also a test of their endurance and commitment as a team.

Junior Kami Grochowski added, "Fenwick is always a big game for us; playing them is a test to see where we are at and what we need to improve on."

With the pressures of doing well and beating the team, Grochowski said, "When we were down two, we all knew we needed to absolutely battle for it. Defense is what New Trier is all about. We knew we needed to keep our hips way out of the water so they couldn't reach our suits, and we needed to press them up against the lane."

Junior Sarah Caywood said, "For the Catholic teams we know to expect a lot of aggression and underwater play. This goes for any team but the Jesuit schools are known for their aggression. In water polo every player is key."

While the Fenwick team played a tough game, the New Trier girls never gave up. In the fourth quarter, Grochowski tied the score at 7. Even with the tremendous amount of teamwork and confidence, Fenwick scored once more to win the game 8-7.

Though this was a blow to the team, morale and hopes were high for the tournament the next day.

Caywood explained the mindset of the team as they go into each game. "We always walk into the game with a positive attitude. We have a really strong team this year and have the potential to beat anybody."

On Saturday, April 2, the girls water polo team played Lyons, St.

Ignatius and Mundelein.

Valdisser said before the matches, "As long as we're confident, we can easily win."

While the team didn't win all three games, they did win two of the three. The loss was against St. Ignatius, who won the game 14-4. Despite that loss, the team beat Lyons 5-3 and Mundelein 15-3.

Even with a successful tournament, there is room for improvement.

According to head coach Matt Wendt, "We just got the whole team together last week with some swimmers finishing their seasons over the break. We need to learn how to communicate and play better as a team," Wendt said.

These areas of improvement haven't gone unnoticed to the players on the team, Valdisser said, "I think what I would do differently is to be more aware of the game in terms of where the ball is and where my teammates are."

The team is working on improving in practice. Wendt said, "Our defense in front of the goal and against drivers needs some improvement." He hopes to further advance their defense strategy during their next games.