



2011 Missouri Valley Conference Tennis

Missouri Valley Conference
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ST. LOUIS, Mo. - Mission accomplished for the 62nd-rated Drake men's tennis team as the Bulldogs captured their fifth NCAA Tournament berth in school history, dispatching of Wichita State, 4-0, on Sunday (May 1) in the title match of the State Farm Missouri Valley Conference Championship.

Drake will now find out its next opponent when the NCAA selection show releases the pairings on Tuesday (May 3) at 4:30 p.m. CT on NCAA.com.

"I'm so proud of the way these guys fought and competed today," Bulldog head coach Evan Austin commented. "We've worked so hard this year and they really deserve the chance to compete in the NCAA Tournament. We are looking forward to the next challenge ahead of us, but right now we're going to enjoy what has been an incredible weekend."

The resolve and fortitude that has defined the Bulldogs during their 15-match winning streak was evident as Drake fought through a pair of tiebreakers to garner the doubles point.

After falling at the No. 3 position, both of the remaining two doubles contests were forced into a seven-point tiebreaker to decide the outcome.

The tandem of sophomores James McKie (Edinburgh, Scotland) and Jean Erasmus (Windhoek, Namibia) came up clutch at the No. 2 slot as the duo bested Vlad Marinsecu and Guillermo Nicol in the tiebreaker, 7-1, to earn a 9-8 (1) decision and send all attention to the top doubles court.

With all eyes on their court, senior Mauricio Ballivian (Santa Cruz, Bolivia) and sophomore Anis Ghorbel (Sfax, Tunisia) pulled out a 7-2 triumph in the tiebreaker to corral the doubles point, downing David Cavalcanti and Matheus Periera, 9-8 (2)

"The doubles point was a huge momentum changer in our favor," said Austin. "To find a way through two tiebreakers showed great composure and toughness."

On the strength of the doubles point in its back pocket, Drake carried a wave of momentum into singles play.

Ballivian, the 2011 MVC Player of the Year, pushed the advantage to 2-0 dispatching of Marinsecu at No. 1, 6-3, 6-2.

Ghorbel was equally impressive registering an identical, 6-3, 6-2, triumph over Periera at No. 2, to bring the Bulldogs to within on point of victory.

The attention then turned to the fourth singles court where McKie was battling Nicol. McKie came through with a 6-3, 7-5 victory to catapult Drake to its third MVC Championship title in the last five seasons.

The Bulldogs stormed the court in celebration with McKie to share in the accomplishments of their tournament run this weekend.

NO. 62 DRAKE (21-2) DEF. WICHITA STATE (16-10), 4-0

MAY 1, 2011 • ST. LOUIS, MO.

SINGLES:

No. 1 Mauricio Ballivian (DU) def. Vlad Marinsecu (WSU), 6-3, 6-2
No. 2 Anis Ghorbel (DU) def. Matheus Periera (WSU), 6-3, 6-2
No. 3 David Cavalcanti (WSU) leading Jean Erasmus (DU), 6-2, 2-4 unfinished
No. 4 James McKie (DU) def. Guillermo Nicol (WSU), 6-3, 7-5
No. 5 Robin Goodman (DU) tied vs. Valentin Mihai (WSU), 5-7, 6-1, unfinished
No. 6 Adrian Chermaci (WSU) leading Jonathan Hadash (DU), 7-6 (6) unfinished
Order of finish: 1,2,4

DOUBLES:

No. 1 Ballivian/Ghorbel (DU) def. Cavalcanti/Periera (WSU), 9-8 (2)
No. 2 Erasmus/McKie (DU) def. Marinsecu/Nicol (WSU), 9-8 (1)
No. 3 Juan Estenssoro/Mihai (WSU) def. Cesar Bracho/Goodman (DU), 8-4
Order of finish: 3,2,1

Courtesy: Drake Univeristy