



2011 Missouri Valley Conference *Tennis*

Missouri Valley Conference
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ST. LOUIS, Mo. - Sophomore Ariane Maack was the deciding match clinching the Illinois State women's tennis team's 4-3 victory over Drake Friday at the 2011 State Farm Missouri Valley Conference Championship at the Dwight Davis Tennis Center in St. Louis, Mo.

The upset didn't come easy for the Redbirds after getting off to a slow start on the day losing the doubles point. Carolina Abello and Heather Nisbet were first to finish at the No. 3 doubles position, losing to Amanda Aragon and Jessica Labarte, 8-3, while Aniko Kiss and Phyllis Tigges fell to Manca Krizman and Gabriela Demos, 8-4, at the No. 1 position.

In singles action, Gabby Phillips finished first at the No. 6 spot defeating Aragon, 6-2, 6-1, while Hannah Esker beat Labarte, 6-1, 6-2, at the No. 5 position. Kiss lost to Krizman at the No. 1 position, 6-2, 6-2, with Tigges winning against Demos, 6-2, 6-3, at the No. 2 spot. At the No. 3 position, Abello lost, 7-6 (7-3) 6-2, to Klavdija Rebol tying the score up at 3-3. Maack's stellar performance at No. 4 singles won the match for the 'Birds after she defeated Jessica Aguilera in a three-set thriller, 2-6, 7-5, 6-2.

Head coach Chris Hoover was pleased with the win, but is anxious to continue with the competition.

"(Friday) was a great day," said Hoover. "This wasn't Ariane's first time being the deciding match for us. She is always a strong player and we can really rely on her. As a team we definitely gutted it out. (Saturday's) win is so valuable to our team and our freshman who look up to the older athletes. Everyone did a great job."

The Redbirds are scheduled to take on No. 2 seed Northern Iowa Saturday in the semifinal round.

"Although Friday was a good day for us we know we're not done," said Hoover. "This win was just us starting to avenge our season. We can enjoy this for now, but we need to be ready to take on Northern Iowa (Saturday)."

The Redbirds are set to begin play at 1:00 p.m., CDT at the Dwight Davis Tennis Center.

Courtesy: Illinois State