



2011 Missouri Valley Conference Tennis

Missouri Valley Conference
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SAINT LOUIS, Mo. -- Fifth-seeded Southern Illinois pulled out arguably its biggest win of the year in the first round of the Missouri Valley Conference championship Friday, taking down fourth-seeded Evansville, 4-3.

SIU avenged its earlier blowout loss to UE from March 31, when the two teams opened the conference regular season and the Purple Aces came away with a 6-1 victory.

"Everyone fought really hard today and played with their heart," said head coach Audra Nothwehr. "This match was a whole different story this time around."

The Salukis struggled in doubles play, with the first and third teams dropping two quick matches 8-3 and 8-5. Southern found itself down 2-0 after a loss at No. 5 singles and was in desperate need of some momentum to keep its season alive.

Melanie Delsart was the first to answer the call as she came up big for the Dawgs at No. 1 singles, handing fellow MVC All-Select honoree Kate Chybowski a straight set loss, 6-2, 6-4. Delsart has now won three straight-matches at the top spot in the lineup.

SIU also had a weapon in its arsenal that it didn't have against Evansville the first time around, in the form of senior Vishakha Sheoran. Sheoran was absent from the singles lineup in the first match at UE, but she returned to the sixth spot with something to prove, downing Carolyn Caire, 6-2, 6-3 and evening the score at two.

"Having Vee in the lineup this time made a huge difference for us," Nothwehr said. "We also had freshmen that knew this time around what strategy to use."

Those freshmen, Anita Lee and Korey Love, sealed the deal for Southern with two clutch victories at No. 2 and No. 4 singles.

Lee dealt Evansville its third straight-set loss on the day just before Jennifer Dien fell in a close three set match at No. 3 singles. With the score all tied up at three, the fate of the match and SIU's season fell on Love.

Love needed three sets to get the job done, but with a decisive 6-3 win in the third stanza she assured the Salukis another match this year.

"Kudos to our match clincher Korey who really played a courageous third set," Nothwehr said of the freshman from Port Orange, Fla.

With the win over Evansville, Southern evens its season record to 12-12 and 4-4 in the MVC. The Dawgs advance to the second round of the Valley championship Saturday morning, when they will face top-seeded Wichita State at 9 a.m. at the Dwight Davis Tennis Center. In the case of inclement weather, the match will be pushed back to 5 p.m. and will be played indoors at Kings Point in Belleville, Ill.

Southern Illinois 4, Evansville 3
4/29/2011 at St. Louis, Mo. (Dwight Davis Tennis Center)

Singles competition

1. Melanie Delsart (SIU) def. Kate Chybowski (UE) 6-2, 6-4
2. Anita Lee (SIU) def. Dora Kotsiou (UE) 6-3, 6-4
3. Aleksandra Dzakula (UE) def. Jennifer Dien (SIU) 6-4, 5-7, 7-5
4. Korey Love (SIU) def. Ashton Schwerin (UE) 7-6, 3-6, 6-3
5. Pin Sorensen (UE) def. Anastacia Simons (SIU) 6-4, 6-1
6. Vishakha Sheoran (SIU) def. Carolyn Caire (UE) 6-2, 6-3

Doubles competition

1. Kate Chybowski/Dora Kotsiou (UE) def. Jennifer Dien/Melanie Delsart (SIU) 8-3
2. Pin Sorensen/Aleksandra Dzakula (UE) def. Korey Love/Anastacia Simons (SIU) 5-4
3. Ashton Schwerin/Kelsey Costales (UE) def. Anita Lee/Vishakha Sheoran (SIU) 8-5

Courtesy: Southern Illinois