

Monday, April 3, 2000

Waves narrowly edge women's tennis team

BY BLAINE DIONNE
The Battalion

The Texas A&M women's tennis team dropped a heartbreaker to the second-ranked Pepperdine University Waves, 6-3, Friday night at the Varsity Tennis Center.

"I tell you, that's a tough loss," A&M women's tennis coach Bobby Kleinecke said. "We're right there — and to come up with it just a hair short — you know?"

Sophomore Martina Nedorostova upset 18th-ranked Ipek Senoglu, 6-4, 7-6 (3) at No. 1 singles to open up the scoring for the Aggies.

The Waves quickly answered with a victory of their own at No. 6, with senior Kathryn Scott dropping her match against Pepperdine coach Bobby Kleinecke.

Pepperdine tied things up again at No. 4, with senior Aggie sophomore Leah Killen being able to dispose of her opponent in three sets, 6-1, 1-6, 6-1, giving the Aggies a 2-1 lead.

Pepperdine tied things up again at No. 3, with senior Aggie sophomore Lisa Dingwall's three set loss to Pepperdine's Dorthie Kurz, 2-6, 6-3, 6-0, at No. 5.

The Waves then took the lead for good when Monika Horvath beat A&M freshman Olivia Karlikova in three sets, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3 at No. 2 and Cintia Tortorella put away Aggie freshman Cassie Haas, 5-7, 7-5, 6-4, at No. 3, giving Pepperdine a 4-2 lead going into doubles.

After falling behind early, the No. 2 doubles team of Haas and Scott fought back to tie the Waves 7-7 before falling 9-7 to their counterparts.

The No. 1 doubles team of Nedorostova and Dingwall actually held a 7-4 lead at one point before dropping their match, 9-7, as well.

The bright spot for the Aggies was that the No. 3 doubles team of Killen and Karlikova defeated Horvath and Tortorella 8-5, but it was not enough.

Afterwards, Pepperdine coach Gualberto Escudero was surprised at the difficulty his team had in putting the Aggies away.

"I thought that they [A&M] had lost enough 5-4 matches to fold against us when the pressure got great," Escudero said. "But they never folded — except at the very, very end. But no, I didn't really expect it to be this close."

There was some controversy after the match over a variable that contributed to the Aggies' play, the crowd. Members of the men's tennis team, who had just upset the Pepperdine men in a historic match, along with other fans, were constantly cheering — and sometimes jeering — the Pepperdine players. Needless to say, Escudero was none too pleased.

"It upset the girls quite a bit," Escudero said. "It was just completely unfair."

Kleinecke had no comment on the matter.

NCAA tourney down to two teams

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Michigan State and Florida both started the season in the Top 10 and never dropped far below. Now they're the only teams left. Similarities over.

While the Spartans are most effective in a half-court game, where they can crash the boards and be physical, the Gators prefer to play at warp speed, using a 10-man rotation and full-court pressure.

Michigan State (31-7) was the only No. 1 seed to reach the Final Four and has lived up to the role in its bid for the national championship.

The Spartans won every game in the NCAA tournament by at least 11 points, including Saturday night's 53-41 victory over Wisconsin.

Florida, seeded fifth, got a first-round scare from Butler before wearing down higher-seeded teams — Illinois, top-ranked Duke and Oklahoma State — with its hectic pace. The Gators (29-7) used the same style to end North Carolina's surprising run with a 71-59 win Saturday night.

"We like to run, too," Michigan State coach Tom Izzo said. "Maybe some of that is our style also. ... I think we have an understanding for that. I think these guys want to run, too."

The Spartans can get up and down the court, having scored more than 80 points nine times this season.

In the tournament, however, they have averaged 68.2 with the five starters averaging between 27 and 35 minutes a game and only two reserves averaging more than 10.

Florida has averaged 79.4 points in the five tournament games, just off its 84.1 mark for the season. The 10 Gators who create all that havoc on the floor average between 13 and 31 minutes a game.

Michigan State starts three seniors, while Florida has one on the team and plays seven sophomores and freshmen in the rotation.

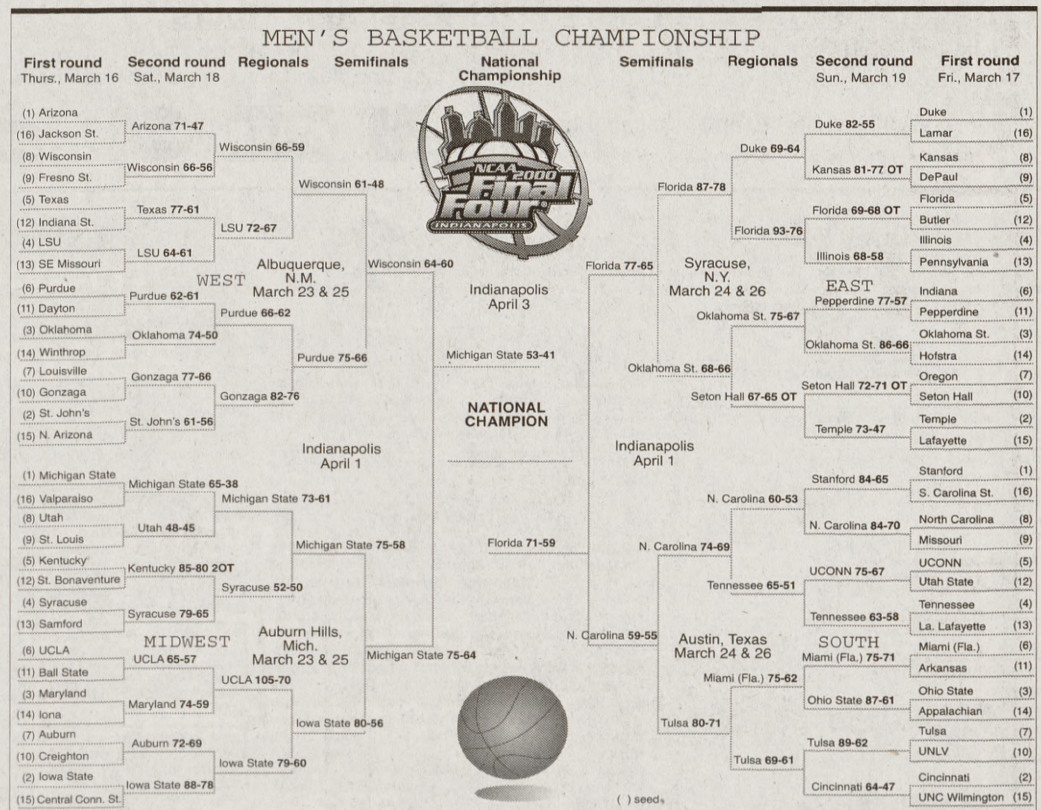
"Our youthfulness has won us a lot of basketball games this year," said Kenyan Weeks, Florida's lone member of the Class of 2000. "I don't know if that's going to be a big problem in this game."

The Spartans were going to use an age-old method to prepare for Florida's full-court press Monday night.

"We always go against six or seven guys in practice and I'm sure we'll have a bunch of players out there today," Michigan State forward Andre Hutson said Sunday.

Florida coach Billy Donovan believes people are getting the wrong impression about his team.

"People think it's just running and jacking up 3-point shots," Donovan said. "We put a tremendous emphasis on guarding the 3-point line. Basically, every team in the country, when they go to practice, is going to practice their half-court offense."



Sports in Brief

Aggies take 2 of 3 from Jayhawks

The Texas A&M baseball team continued its winning ways over the weekend as it took two of three games from the University of Kansas Jayhawks.

A&M won Friday's game, 6-3, becoming a 3-for-5 performance from junior third baseman Chris Russ.

Junior right fielder Daylan Holt rescued the Aggies in Saturday's game as his two-run home run in the top of the 11th inning sent the Aggies to an 8-6 win.

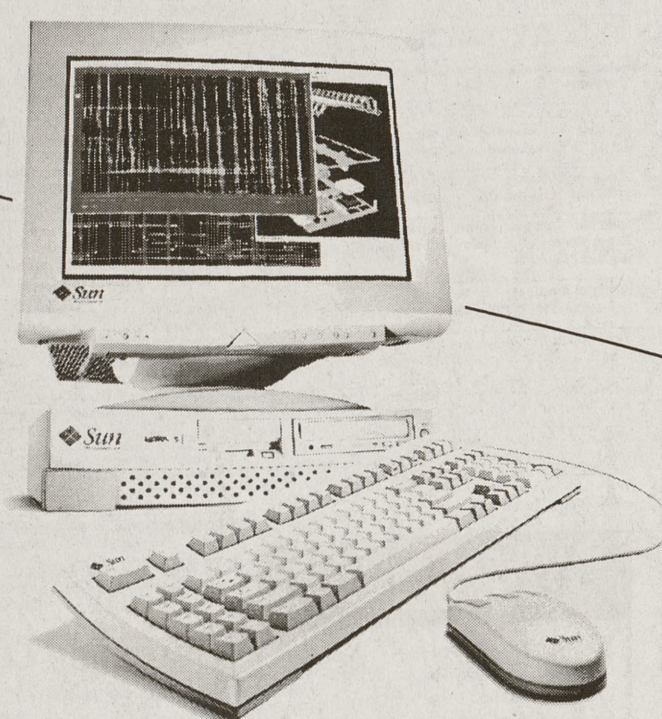
The Jayhawks won 8-1 Sunday to avoid the sweep.



HOLT

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