

Tennis Update

By Alex Lipford
Staff Writer

The tennis season here at Heard County High School is going strong. The team has had a busy few weeks getting ready for the region and state playoffs later this month. In March, the team matched up against powerhouses like LaGrange and Shaw in hopes to bring out any errors that need to be tuned up at practice. They have also faced up against region foes Macon County, Jordan, and Lamar County. The coaches and players believe that the tough schedule against these really stout teams will really help the tennis team out when it comes time for the region and state meets.

At the Granger Invitational at LaGrange High School, the team played against some of the best teams in the area. The guy's team was able to bring out a win against Shaw, while the girl's team got a pre-region matchup with Callaway. Head coach Brad McLain was really glad to have this match because "we don't get to film games in tennis like we do in football, so it was good for us to see what Callaway has."

On March 17, the teams played against region opponent Macon County. Although Macon County is not exactly one of the hardest teams on the schedule, it was still a match that had to be taken seriously because when playing weaker teams it is easier to "fall into certain mental traps," according to McLain. McLain claims that he was proud of the team because they "did a good job of being patient and taking advantage of opportuni-



ties." Two days later, on March 19, the team traveled down to Jordan High School in Columbus. Even though Jordan's boys' team never showed up, the Heard County girls' team got to face up against a region team that they will be seeing later on at the region meet. At Jordan, Hannah Burson won 8-2, Rebekah Tatum won 8-0, and Susan Avery and Breanna Davis won there doubles match 8-1.

The team challenged Lamar County on Tuesday, March 24. At this match, "Zach Burson really played some lights-out tennis," exclaimed McLain. Also, Justin Mantle and Neel Patel both beat some really tough opponents. When asked about what the team needs to work on most right now, McLain responded "staying focused is the problem right now" and that "we can't let anything distract us from our goals."

The guy's team has only one more match before they compete in the region tournament. That last match will be against Pike County and if they win then they will be the number one seed in the region going into the region tournament. The girls have a tougher road ahead as they have two more matches left before the region tournament. They will play against Callaway on Wednesday, April 1 and then have to turn around the next day and play Pike County. If the girl's team wins both of these matches then they will go into the region tournament as the number two seed. Overall, McLain likes how this year's team is "willing to work" and how they have "done virtually everything I have asked them to do." McLain believes that this year's team has "a great shot at making Heard County history."



with Hannah Burson

By Justin Mantle
Staff Writer

Hannah Burson, a junior at Heard County High School, has been a vital part of the high school's successful tennis team. She has played for three years in the singles position, and for the past two years she has played the number one singles for the girl's team. Her winning record has been a complement to the team and is expected to continue her success at the upcoming region tournament.

Q: Do you play any other sports?

A: Yes, I have cheered since the ninth grade.

Q: What are your goals for the tennis season?

A: I expect the girls and boys to go all the way to the state playoffs.



Q: Why did you first join the tennis team?

A: My family is a very active tennis family, and I wanted to try something new. I figured tennis would be perfect.

Q: What do you expect from yourself this season?

A: I expect to be the best I can be, not only for myself, but for the girls' team. I also expect to improve my skills.

Q: Do you plan on going to college? If so, do you plan to pursue tennis in college?

A: Yes, I plan on attending UWG and transferring to Savannah College of Art and Design of Atlanta to pursue my life-long dream of being an interior designer. Tennis was fun in high school, but that's a no to college tennis.

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