Tennis squads strive for success against national powerhouses

By Steven M. Russell  
Staff Writer

The Union University tennis teams haven’t started their conference seasons off like they would have liked, with both suffering losses at home against Freed-Hardeman Monday.

The Lady Bulldogs were shut out 7-0 by the Lady Lions. Union wasn’t able to escape with a victory in either singles or doubles play.

Meredith Rollyson and Clara Martinez both came close, forcing their matches into three sets, but fell short in the end.

The loss puts Union’s record at 2-5 on the season and 1-2 in TranSouth play. However, the Lady Bulldogs aren’t ready to give up just yet.

Union’s next match will come Saturday at 9 a.m. as they host Lee College in a TranSouth conference match. The Lady Bulldogs then travel to Blue Mountain Tuesday, who they defeated Feb. 27 in a match held at Union.

The men’s tennis team has also suffered their share of bad luck. Alberto Gandarias, Union’s No. 1 player and No. 2 in the nation, suffered a wrist injury before the Birmingham-Southern match and was forced to retire the match after one set. He sat out the Freed-Hardeman match but should be ready to play again next week.

The Bulldogs record fell to 1-3 on the season, 0-2 in TranSouth play with the loss to the fifth-ranked Lions. The only Bulldog victory of the day came when the doubles team of Herman Alenda and Nahan Raines defeated FHU’s Guilherme Gottardi and Leandro Carvalho.

Despite the bad start, sophomore Matt Walker has a positive outlook on the future and how the losing has improved the team.

“We can’t let a couple of bad matches get us down. It has made people work a little harder,” Walker said.

“Everybody realizes it is still early,” he added. If everyone works hard and continues to improve, “we’ll be all right.”

Union’s next match comes today as the Bulldogs host TranSouth opponent Lee College at 2 p.m., and Saturday as they travel to Memphis to face Oklahoma Christian.

Upcoming Schedules

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Union rally in fifth saves split against Lady Eagles

Terri Estes’ double in fifth inning drives in two runs, enough for win in game two.

By Jeff Rushing  
Sports Editor

Union’s Lady Bulldog softball squad, ranked No. 29 in the preseason, split a doubleheader at Lambuth Wednesday, dropping the opener 2-1 and rallying to win game two, 3-1.

Union is 9-3, while Lambuth suffered its second loss of the year for a 12-2 mark.

Junior pitcher Lynde Capogreco took the loss in game two, allowing two runs in the fourth inning on two hits. She is now 4-1, and entered the game having allowed only one earned run in 30 innings thus far this season.

Union’s run in the first inning was scored by Eileen Johnston with an RBI by Bethany Melrose.

The Lady Bulldogs trailed the 33rd-ranked Lady Eagles, 1-0, after four innings in game two, but rallied for three runs in the top of the fifth for the win.

Catcher Chanda Franks led off the inning with a single, and advanced to second base on a sacrifice bunt by Jennifer Collier, and to third base on a single by Nina Wilson. Franks scored after a single by Emma Hernandez, with Wilson advancing to second.

Junior Terri Estes then knocked a double, driving in Wilson and Hernandez for what proved to be the winning runs.

Union starting pitcher Tina Spivey improved to 4-2, scattering eight hits while allowing one run in seven innings. In the seventh, she forced Lambuth’s Tonika Carter to fly out, ending the game with two Lady Eagles on base.

“I was pleased with our effort,” coach Brian Dunn said. “Anytime you split on the road its a good win, and Lambuth has a good program.

“It was a tough loss in the first game,” he added. “They scored those two runs, and I don’t think they should have scored any.”

Union will host Freed-Hardeman Saturday at 10 a.m., and will travel to Pensacola, Fla., Monday and Tuesday.

Bulldogs finish year with loss to Berry

Berry’s Calvin Hocker sinks basket with three seconds remaining for win.

By Steven M. Russell  
Staff Writer

The end of the season came way too early for the Union University Bulldogs as they suffered a heartbreaking loss to Berry College, 57-55, in the first round of the TranSouth Conference tournament.

“They’re my Bulldogs and I’m proud of them,” head coach Ralph Turner said after the game.

“This is a sad ending to what has been a great year for the kids. They played hard and I’m proud of them,” he added.

Senior Kirk Goehring hit the front end of a one-and-one with 26 seconds left in the game to tie the game. However, Calvin Hocker’s basket with three seconds left broke the tie and the hearts of both the Union players and fans.

But with the book being closed on this season, coach Turner is still optimistic about the future of the program.

“I’m really excited about next year. We’re going to have a few new faces and out kids will compete a little better,” Turner said.

The game also ended the college career of a few Union Bulldogs. Seniors Kirk Goehring, Eric Barnes and Derek Davenport played their final games in Fred DeLay Gymnasium.

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1997 NAIA Division I
Women’s Basketball Championship

Champs
From Page 1
game into overtime.

“I wish we’d won before overtime, but I don’t think if it went into overtime, we would win. It gave us time to settle down,” Street said.

Street then proceeded to score Union’s first eight points of the extra period for a 77-75 lead with one minute remaining.

But freshman Meg Griffin grabbed the spotlight from Street at the end of overtime, making four pressure free throws with 25 and 11 seconds left, and blocking two shots by Sanders to seal the win. Griffin finished with 10 points and four assists.

National Tournament Outlook
The Lady Bulldogs have endured more than their share of injuries in 1996-97, but have still managed to enter the NAIA national tournament next week with a No. 3 seed after being ranked No. 2 most of 1997. The following is a list of players who are injury prone and their status for the tournament:

### Rose Agnoun, freshman
Broken nose, has continued to play with protective mask.

### Leslie Henderson, freshman
Ankle, out since early February, but expected to play in national tournament.

### Celeste Gholson, freshman
Ankle, out in December and early January, improving game-by-game. Will play in tournament.

### Dion Thornton, sophomore
Tore the Anterior Cruciate-Ligament (ACL), first in high school, next in last year’s tournament. Playing at full strength at tournament time.

### April Pearson, freshman
Knee, played first game of season before redshirted.

### Kelly Hayes, senior
Third Team All-American, tore left ACL Jan. 4 after injuring right ACL in last year’s national tournament. Unfortunately, Kelly is done for her career at Union, unless she is cleared by the trainers to play a minute or two in case of a first-round blowout.

1997 NAIA National
Women’s Champion

Baseball dawgs seek answers after 7-11 start

By Jeff Rushing
Sports Editor

The Bulldogs fell to 7-11 after a 2-0 shutout by Lambuth Wednesday at Union.

The sign of a good team that’s able to turn it around, because the hitting is there, the pitching is there, we just have to be there mentally.”

Freshman Kevin Overcash agrees. “Right now the team unity’s not there,” he said. “Once we get behind we feel that we can’t come back. But we’ll make a run in the end.”

Union will host TranSouth Conference foe Berry this weekend, with one game Friday and a doubleheader Saturday.

Bulldogs receive honors
Kevin Overcash and Ed Grammer earned TranSouth Conference honors for their play March 2-9.

Overcash, a 6-foot freshman from Collierville, Tenn., was named TSAC Player of the Week after hitting .454 (12-for-26), a .545 average. He stole 10-of-11 bases, and leads the league in stolen bases with 21 going into this weekend’s action.

Grammer, a 6-4 junior from Ripley, Tenn., was named TSAC Pitcher of the Week. He pitched 10 innings, giving up one earned run and striking out 10 for Union’s best record at 3-0. Grammer’s 1.59 earned run average places him fourth in the TSAC.