

Sports

Baseball sweeps North
 Carolina in three game series
 Sports/B2

Tennis defeats N.C. State, Furman; rises to No. 2

By Jessica Reigle
 Old Gold and Black Reporter

The Demon Deacon women's tennis team appears to be unbeatable this season. Not only have they won 13 straight matches, but they have consistently been one of the top-ranked teams in the country throughout the season.

The Deacs added to their winning streak April 8 and 9, breezing by N.C. State and Furman to improve their record to 16-1 overall.

The Deacons began their weekend April 8 at the Wolfpack Tennis Complex, where they swept N.C. State in a 9-0 victory.

Freshman Adria Engel played at No. 1 singles for the Deacs, crushing Marissa Gildemeister 6-1, 6-2. Sophomore Janet Bergman had equal success at the No. 2 spot, beating N.C. State's Brie Glover 6-3, 6-0.

Sophomore Maren Haus, junior Jackie

Houston and senior Annemarie Milton also all claimed singles points for the Deacons, winning their No. 3, 4 and 5 singles matches, respectively.

Rarely used sophomore Lea Miller made an impressive appearance for the Deacs at the No. 6 singles spot, stomping the Wolfpack's Landis Strader 6-2, 6-0.

"The conditions at this match were tough, since it was really windy, but everyone focused on their court and got the job done," Milton said.

The Deacons swept the doubles points, shutting the Wolfpack out in every way possible. Freshman Bea Bielik paired up with Bergman at the No. 1 doubles spot to notch an 8-1 victory.

Milton and Haus won their No. 2 doubles match, and Engel and Houston followed suit, clinching the win for the Deacs.

Head Coach Brian Fleishman was very happy with the team's continued success and ability to maintain a strong focus and

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Annemarie Milton
 senior

level of play. "For the level of competition we had, we played very well. With a team this good and this far along into the season, there is always a chance for everyone to be lazy and complacent," Fleishman said.

Fleishman is correct in his assertion that the Deacs are far from lazy. Fresh off their 9-0 win over the Wolfpack, the Deacons traveled to Furman's Minor Mickel Tennis Center April 9 to claim yet another victory. The Deacs beat Furman 8-1 in a match that wasn't even close, as the Deacons were clearly the

better team.

All six singles points were taken by the Deacs, with Engel again at the No. 1 spot. Engel beat Megan Dunigan, 6-0, 7-5 in a match that looked easy from the outset, but proved to be quite a challenge.

Bielik reclaimed her position at No. 2 singles, defeating her opponent in a 6-1, 6-0 sweep.

Bergman, Haus, Houston and Milton all secured wins for the Deacs at the No. 3, 4, 5 and 6 spots, respectively.

Milton credits the team's strong frame of mind for their ability to focus. "For every team that comes in, we are one of their biggest matches. We just have to be prepared to go in and play strong," Milton said.

The Deacons went on to win two out of three doubles matches to secure the 8-1 win.

Fleishman, who has always stressed to the team that the ACC matches are the most important of the season, has high

expectations of this phenomenal team. "As a coach, I want everyone to go out and not underestimate the opponent," he said.

The Deacons have three more ACC matches ahead of the before the ACC Tournament, beginning with their match against North Carolina April 13.

UNC is notorious for being tough competition and always striving to beat the Deacs at something, so this will be a tough match, but the Deacons are sure to go in fully prepared.

Following their match against UNC, the Deacons will face Maryland and Virginia before traveling to Atlanta for the ACCs.

"They have been playing like a highly ranked team, and I expect that they will keep playing like that," Fleishman said.

The Deacons' record stands at 16-1 overall, and the team improved one spot on the No. 2 national ranking it held the week before.

Women's tennis on path to greatness

By Jared Klose
 Sports Editor

As the old saying goes: good things come to those who wait. But then again, sometimes good luck comes from out of the blue. So wait. Which is it then? The Demon Deacon women's tennis team has shown that perhaps you don't have to choose a school of thought.

This season, the squad has effortlessly blended these seemingly incongruous philosophies into a mixture that has equaled tremendous success. On the one hand, the program has built its reputation slowly over the past decade, but on the other hand, this wasn't even supposed to be the year that the team would be at its best. Regardless of how they got to where they are or whether 2000 will be their year, the second-ranked Demon Deacon team is in the midst of its best season ever.

Aside from the rash of worst-to-first outliers that have run rampant in the professional sports world (e.g. the Twins, Braves, Marlins and Rams) the story of improvement for the women's tennis team is remarkable.

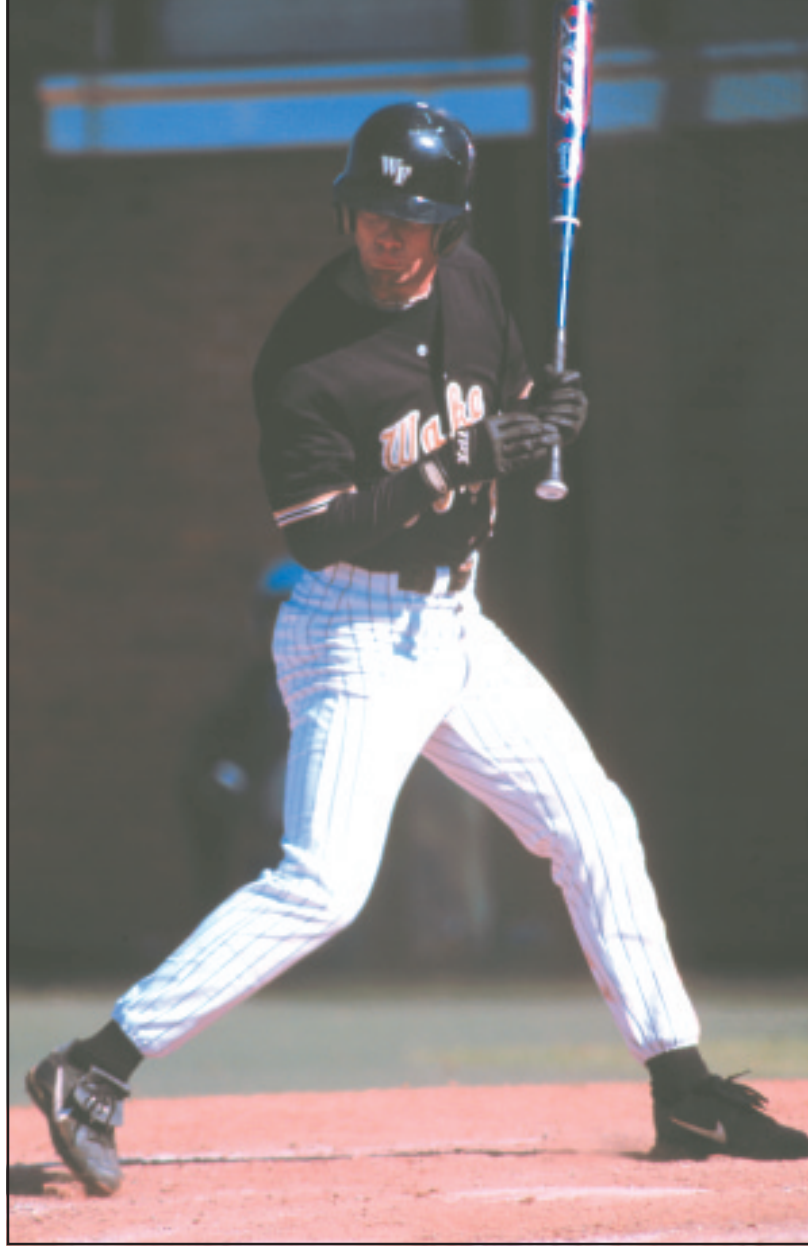
Consider, for example, that before 1991 the team had never been ranked and did not finish a season ranked in the top 25 until 1992 when they sneaked in at the 25th spot. Former Head Coach Lew Gerrard deserves much of the credit for recruiting players and developing the program during the 12 years he coached the team dating from 1988 and was named ACC Coach of the Year in 1995 and 1997.

Since Gerrard's departure, however, Head Coach Brian Fleishman has turned a very good program into an outstanding one. Even when the team lost the services of junior Mariel Verban, who was ranked in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's

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Baseball blanks Spartans, rocks Hokies

By Daniel Ogle
 Old Gold and Black Reporter



Chris Carlstrom/Old Gold and Black
 Junior Corey Sullivan cleared the bases with his two run blast in the Deacons' 10-3 win against the Virginia Tech Hokies April 12.

After sweeping 5th ranked North Carolina and before they head to 6th ranked Clemson this weekend, the 11th ranked Demon Deacon baseball team took care of business this week by defeating UNC-Greensboro and Virginia Tech.

On April 11, the Diamond Deacs traveled to Greensboro and shut out the Spartans 2-0 behind the strong pitching performance of senior Eric Schmitt.

The right-hander started against the Spartans, only because he pitched only two innings against North Carolina this weekend. He was limited against the Tar Heels, because of an arm injury that ended his season last year.

"I was disappointed to only throw a couple of innings," Schmitt said. "But it worked out for the best because I got to pitch on Tuesday and I also get to pitch this weekend against Clemson."

Schmitt ran his record to 5-0 on the year as he struck out five, while yielding no runs and surrendering only five hits over six innings.

"I had pretty good stuff and I have a good infield and outfield, so I just had to throw strikes," Schmitt said.

The Diamond Deacs scored all the runs that Schmitt would need in the top half of the fourth inning as junior Corey Slavik walked with the bases loaded, scoring junior Jason Aquilante, who reached base by being hit for a record-breaking 23rd time in his career.

The Deacs added their final run of the afternoon in the top of the eighth inning, when junior Matt Price scored on a passed ball to make the final tally 2-0. Sophomore David Bush pitched the final 1-1/3 innings to pick up his fifth save on the year.

"We want to go down to Clemson and show everyone that we can beat a top team."

Eric Schmitt
 senior

After handling the Spartans, the Diamond Deacs romped through Virginia Tech 10-3 yesterday in Blacksburg, VA, as junior Corey Sullivan and sophomore Jamie Athas both blasted home runs.

Junior Chase Voshell and junior Dan Conway in the first to give the Deacs a 3-1 lead at the end of the first inning. Athas launched his home run in the top of the second, and Sullivan hit a two-run bomb in the top of the fourth to give the Deacs an 8-1 lead.

Sophomore Brad Comer surrendered one run over four innings to pick up his second win of the season. Senior Matt Briggs entered the contest in the fifth and pitched three scoreless innings, and sophomore Ryan Lewis pitched the final two innings to close out the Hokies.

After defeating the Spartans and the Hokies, the Diamond Deacs turn their attention to the 6th ranked Clemson Tigers.

The Tigers, who have been ranked as high as number one, boast an excellent pitching staff. The Tigers' Scott Berney, Jarrod Schmidt, and Ryan Mottl have the top three ERAs in the ACC.

The Diamond Deacons welcome the challenge of facing the Tigers and look forward to winning a conference series from a top 10 team for the third time this season.

"We want to go down to Clemson and show everyone that we can beat a top team," Schmitt said.

Men's tennis recovering from early setbacks in ACC

By Jared Klose
 Sports Editor

The Demon Deacon men's tennis team knew that after stumbling out of the gate in ACC play it would be facing an uphill battle for the rest of the now quickly concluding season. The Deacs' performance last week in matches against East Tennessee State, Virginia Commonwealth and conference rival Georgia Tech, however, hinted that Mother Nature may still be planning a spring blooming for the team, as things started looking up when it went 2-1 against its foes.

Their record now stands at 11-10 overall and 2-5 in the ACC.

When the Demon Deacons traveled to Johnson City, Tenn., April 6, their match against the ETSU Bucs was not supposed to be a nail-biter. But instead of an easy victory, the Deacs were forced to scrap their way to a 4-3 win. Despite taking an early 1-0 lead when the No. 1 and No. 2 doubles pairings of junior Raul Munoz and freshman Mike Murray and seniors Johan Hansen and Mike Berger won their matches (8-6 and 8-3 respectively), the Bucs fought back in singles. ETSU's top-heavy lineup earned three points in as many matches with its victories over the Deacons' top three seeds when Murray, Hansen and Berger fell in straight sets at their positions.

The depth of the Deacon squad soon proved to be its salvation as the bottom three seeds came through with three wins of their own to clinch the win. At the fourth position, Munoz toughed out a three-set match (61, 3-6, 6-3), and sophomore Justin Kaufmann and junior Brett Mauro breezed to 6-2, 6-2 and 6-2, 6-3 wins as the fifth and sixth seeds.

The same pattern would emerge in the Deacs' next two matches as well, which was cause for Head Coach Jeff Zinn to describe the team's recent play as being much better.

"We're finally at full strength. We had a lot of guys dinged up there for a while, and most everyone is healthy again other than Raul still being a bit injured," Zinn said. "We've shown improvement over the last three matches. Everything is coming together over that last three matches really, and playing better every match is one of our goals this season. Finally being at full strength again, we're back to playing the way we should."

The 16th-ranked VCU Rams showed, however, that even a full-strength Demon Deacon squad was not up to their level in their 4-2 win over the Deacs on their home courts April 8 at the Wake Forest Indoor Tennis Stadium.

This time the Deacs were unable to take two of



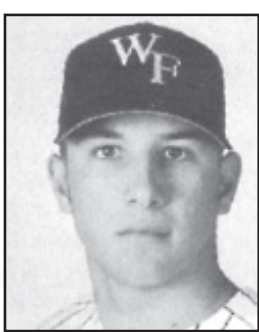
Chris Carlstrom/Old Gold and Black
 Senior Johan Hansen stretches for a forehand in the Deacs' home win over Georgia Tech April 11.

Deac of the Week

When junior starter Scott Siemon forgot to bring his "A" game last weekend against the North Carolina Tar Heels, it was fortunate for the Deacons that freshman Ryan Braun did.

The flame throwing righthander pitched six perfect innings against the Tar Heels April 7 to pick up his first win of the season. Braun entered the contest in the bottom of the fourth inning with the Diamond Deacons trailing 7-3 and the bases loaded with no one out and mowed down all 17 batters he faced.

Braun also pitched April 9 and notched his second win of the series and the season as the Deacons swept the fifth-ranked Tar Heels.



Ryan Braun