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Seward Women's Tennis Team Qualfies for NJCAA Tournament

On the heels of a record setting year, the Seward County Lady Saints are headed back to the NJCAA National Tournament after finishing 2nd Saturday at the Region VI Tournament in Wichita.

In maybe the most anticipated match of the whole tournament, Seward's 4th ranked Paula Lopez went head to head with Cowley's 5th ranked Ana Ruzir in the championship match of the #1 singles bracket. Three weeks prior it was Lopez getting the best of Ruzir in a three setter, but this time it was Ruzir getting her revenge when it meant most, downing Lopez 7-6 (5), 6-3 to claim the title.

The championship match at #2 singles also looked to be a tight matchup on paper as Seward County's Paula Coyos battled Cowley's Sarah Giraldo. Coyos had other ideas as she easily handled Giraldo in the opening set 6-0 before burying her 6-3 in the second set to win the #2 singles championship.

Kathryn Roohan took the court for Seward in #3 singles in the third place match Saturday and made up for a loss on Friday with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Johnson County's Kara Hoegerl to finish third and earn the Lady Saints 1.5 team points.

After being blanked on day one of the tournament, Seward's Jackie Arnold came out with a vengeance Saturday as she took on Barton's Kelly Brauer in the #4 singles third place match. Arnold took the opening set 6-3 and bounced Brauer 6-4 in the second set to finish third.

Naomie Bukassa took the court for the third place match for the Lady Saints in #5 singles. After Bukassa got a big win on day one of the tournament, she had some troubles on Saturday, falling 6-1, 6-4 to Narumi Hayano from Hesston to finish the tournament fourth.

Grace Golden rounded out the Lady Saints singles roster and finished Seward's singles play in style Saturday, downing Brittanie Eskut from Barton 6-2, 7-5 in the #6 singles third place match to again earn the Lady Saints an extra .5 points for the team standings.

In one of the more lopsided matchups in the finals round, 6th ranked Lopez and Coyos teamed up to take on Cowley in the #1 doubles championship match. The result played true to its billing as the Lady Saints pair dominated, winning 6-3, 6-2 to win the championship in the top draw.

The final match to finish Saturday was at #2 doubles where Roohan and Arnold took the court for Seward against Barton in the third place match of that bracket. Barton pulled out a nailbiting 7-6 win in the first set and took the momentum into the second set, winning 6-4 to take the match 2-0.

After losing a tough one in the semifinals of the #3 doubles draw, Bukassa and Golden rebounded on Saturday, winning their third place match rather easily, 6-2, 6-1, over the Barton Cougars to finish the tournament third at the spot.

Cowley dominated the tournament once again, finishing 1st with 25 total points while the Lady Saints finished 2nd, their highest finish since 2008, with 16 points in the tournament. The final team qualifying for the National Tournament was Johnson County in 3rd with 13 points while Barton finished just short of a bid with 11 points and Hesston struggled to just 2.5 points.

The Lady Saints will now have a week to prepare for the National Tournament which begins on Saturday, May 3rd in Tyler, Texas.

REGION VI TOURNAMENT RESULTS<http://www.sewardsaints.com/sports/wten/2013-14/releases/20140426i4exwo>

A shorthanded Seward County bunch gave it their best effort at the Region VI Tournament in Wichita Saturday, but with just three players playing, it was too much to overcome as they fell four points short of their fifth straight trip to the NJCAA National Tournament.

Ronzai Saurombe worked his way all the way from the 4th seed in the draw to the championship match on Saturday where he met up with 2nd seeded and 9th ranked Harry Busby of Cowley. The former Seward recruit, Busby, had little trouble with the Saints top man, winning 6-2, 6-2 over Saurombe to kill his chance at an individual trip to the National Tournament.

The third place match at #2 singles was one of the more intriguing matchups of the day as the Saints 20th ranked Alejandro Gonzalez took on 24th ranked Kevin Kochersperger of Johnson County. Gonzalez controlled the first set, winning 6-2, but had to grind out a 7-5 victory in the second set to win the match and take third in the tournament.

The highlight of the day for Seward came in #3 singles where freshman Trevor Kipping finished off one of the finest rookie seasons in school history as he improve to 10-1 on the season and claimed the Region VI Championship with a dominating 6-4, 6-1 upset win over 26th ranked Josh Coleman from Cowley.

The Saints lost valuable point opportunities at #4, #5, and #6 singles as Colin Glassman was forced out due to an injury at #4 and they failed to have a representative at #5 and #6.

Out of the race for a team trip to the National Tournament, Saurombe and Gonzalez still had an opportunity to go as a pair if they were to win the championship match at #1 doubles. After winning the ITA National Championship in the fall and opening the spring season ranked #1, the pair finished a disappointing spring with a 6-4, 6-3 loss to Harry Busby and Erik Eldgasen of Cowley in the championship match to finish the season at just 7-5.

With Glassman injured, the Saints were unable to compete at #2 doubles, finishing 4th without even taking the court in the tournament, while Seward did not have a representative at #3 doubles.

The Saints finished with 9.5 points overall in the tournament, trailing Cowley who nearly pulled off a sweep with 26 points, Johnson County who finished with 14.5, and Barton who makes their first trip to the National Tournament in 5 years with 13.5 points. The lone team the Saints finished in front of was Hesston who ended the tournament with just 3 points.

REGION VI TOURNAMENT RESULTS<http://www.sewardsaints.com/sports/mten/2013-14/releases/20140426na8alq>
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