



Three seniors secure UNCW women's tennis

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An engraved rock sits on women's tennis coach Jenny Garrity's desk reading: Success is a journey, not a destination. Seniors Lindsey Hess, Kristin Mears and Cassie Martin have covered a lot of ground in their time playing tennis for UNCW. Since their freshman year, the team has doubled in size, received honors for academics and moved up in conference.

"Now as a senior I look back on

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-Kristin Mears

where we started and where we are now, and it's amazing how far we have come," Kristin Mears said. "Every year since I've been here I've been able to say, 'This is the best team we've ever had,' and then the next year we just get better."

Although the official season doesn't begin until spring, the women's tennis team uses the off-

season for preparation. Three-hour practices, six days a week, followed by lifting weights has kept the team at the top of their game. Hess believes that without the long workouts, hours on the court, early track runs and late nights in the weight room, they would not be where they are today.

"It's not normal that you have an entire team as close as we are. We practice together, lift together, eat together, hang out together, basically do everything together," Mears said. "My nine teammates and two wonderful coaches are my home away from home. We are essentially one big family, and that is the heart and soul of this program."

The women's tennis team has been recognized repeatedly by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) for outstanding performance in the classroom. They were named an All-America Academic team, which requires a 3.2 cumulative grade point average, for the past four seasons. Lindsey Hess was honored as an ITA Scholar-Athlete for the third year in a row. This requires a student athlete to have a

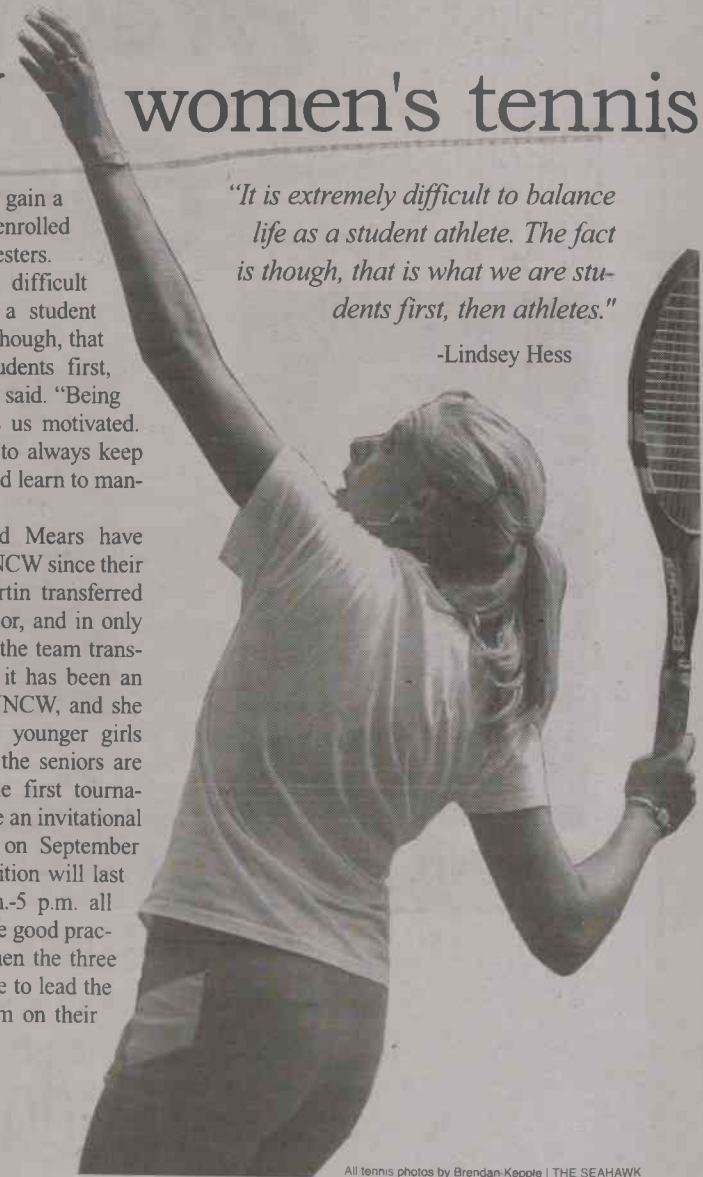
minimum 3.5 GPA, gain a varsity letter and be enrolled for at least two semesters.

"It is extremely difficult to balance life as a student athlete. The fact is though, that is what we are students first, then athletes," Hess said. "Being busy is what keeps us motivated. It is just important to always keep priorities straight and learn to manage time well."

While Hess and Mears have played tennis for UNCW since their freshman year, Martin transferred from Elon as a junior, and in only two years has seen the team transform. Martin said it has been an honor to play for UNCW, and she hopes to leave the younger girls with the pride that the seniors are leaving behind. The first tournament this fall will be an invitational hosted by UNCW on September 16-18. The competition will last all day from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. all three days. It will be good practice for January, when the three seniors will continue to lead the women's tennis team on their successful journey.

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All tennis photos by Brendan Kepple | THE SEAHAWK



Men's tennis sweeps invitationals; setting up for more wins

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After sweeping the UNCW/Landfall Invitational singles titles, the UNCW men's tennis team is looking to continue their hot play next weekend at the Coastal Carolina Invitational. The Seahawks endured their first losing season since 2000-2001, posting an 8-12 mark, and perhaps the Landfall is only a preview of a turnaround season.

Junior Caio Piacentini took the crown in the Teal bracket, defeating Mount Olive's Gabriel Garcia 6-1, 7-5 in the final.

Piacentini is coming off a big year for the Seahawks, going 14-4 in singles play as a sophomore. The other Seahawk champion was Dennis Myers, a junior newcomer from Charlotte. Myers won his first two matches handily, before being tested by UNC's Sandeep Daiya 4-6, 6-3, 10-7 en route to the Blue bracket title.

On the women's side, a pair of Seahawks also took home a title, with senior Lindsey Hess and freshman Lauren Isenhour teaming up for the women's doubles championship. The championship match had a bit of a familiar feeling,

with their competitors being UNCW teammates Kate Marshall and Kate Carlson.

The winning ways continue this past weekend at the UNCW invitational, with another Seahawk tandem taking the title. This time seniors Cassie Martin and Kristin Mears defeated Charlotte's Kath Robey and Koren Fleming by a 8-5 count in the final match. The women's team return to the court October 14, travelling to Old Dominion for the ODU Invitational tournament.