

Men's tennis team has drive, teamwork

◆ Tennis team riding a three-match winning streak, hoping to improve on early 1-3 record

BY DANA MENDOZA
Staff Writer

It is a game of skill, a game of anticipation and control, and it is a game based on sportsmanship and honesty. It is a sport that has a long history at Guilford College. What other sport fits such a detailed description than men's tennis?

Although the team is small compared to most other Guilford teams, the body of the program and those who fill its positions consistently remain competitive with each new season.

The Quakers have done an impressive job at stepping up as a team despite the loss of key players Kevin Perndergrast and John Terry two years ago. The '98 squad is made up of ten dependable athletes who look forward to each upcoming match with confidence and the drive to win.

Thus far the Quakers sport a 4-4 record. The team started out the season with a 5-2 win against Ferrum. Unfortunately, Guilford immediately fell into a three-match losing streak when they faced Washington and Lee, Catawba, and Transylvania.

It is not a surprise, given the talent of the team, that the losses failed to affect the team's morale and determination. The team evidently would not accept a 1-3 standing and fought back, giving themselves a three-match winning streak against Mt. Union, Slippery Rock, and Goucher College.

The Quakers have eight more matches until the end of their scheduled season. And with only one conference match behind them, the team must continue to prepare themselves to play six more teams in the ODAC.

It is prime time for the Quakers to take advantage of the wide variety

of talent which makes up this year's team. Coach Steve MacDermut believes that the Quakers have a much deeper team this year as a result of both the new and returning players.

In the number one singles slot is Dan Drossman, a third-year player. Drossman was ranked 33rd in the nation (Division III) and seventh in the South in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) preseason rankings. He reached the finals of the Rolex Tournament in the fall, which featured the top 64 players in the South. Drossman's personal record is presently 5-3.

Seeded at number two for the Quakers is junior Gary Young. Young has been on the team for three years and continues to hold a position as the season moves ahead.

The player seeded at number three is senior Jay Weatherly. Coach

MacDermut commented that, "Jay had a good season last year and continues to improve. So far he is having a strong season this year and he is specifically helping out a great deal with doubles." Johnny Mavromatis returned to the men's team this year after not playing last season. He has earned a solid position at number four and is welcomed back by his teammates.

Men's Tennis Schedule

Roanoke- 4/2/98 3 pm
at Hamden-Sydney, 3 pm
Lynchburg, 3 pm
Averett, 3 pm
Virginia Wesleyan, 2 pm
at Bridgewater, 12 pm
ODAC tournament (at Guilford)
4/24 - 4/25

Looking ahead to 1998 MLB season

BY DAN GATTI
Sports Editor

Baseball preview magazines are such crap. They charge you \$5.95 for their TEAM-BY-TEAM ANALYSIS and PREDICTIONS (Always printed in 24-point font and preferably in bright or even neon colors) and then they make the great and daring prediction: EVERYTHING WILL BE THE SAME! For example, I'm holding right now a copy of the 1998 preview issue of *The Sporting News*. In its American League section, it is predicting that the division crowns will be New York, Cleveland, and Seattle, with, shock of all shocks, Baltimore as the wild card. In other words, New York is going to unseat Baltimore on top of the AL East, but the four playoff teams will be exactly the same.

And maybe they will be exactly the same. But I don't need to buy a \$6 magazine to tell me something I could just figure out by looking at the final 1997 standings. So for those of you who are similarly dissatisfied, I offer to you: the gambler's 1998 predictions.

Are these all going to be right? Maybe not, but at least they're real predictions. They're based on the knowledge that things

don't stay the same, and that no team is exactly alike two straight years. This week, the American League.

AL EAST

1. Boston. Thought I'd start you out with the biggest surprise of the year. In the off season, Boston acquired the greatest pitcher in baseball last year, Pedro Martinez, who at 26 is a much better bet than Randy Johnson (35), Roger Clemens (36) or Mike Mussina (33). The additions of veteran closer Dennis Eckersley and rookies Brian Rose and Robinson Checo, give the Red Sox the most pitching depth in the league to go along with their second best offense in baseball last year. That adds up to wins in the mid-90s.

2. Toronto. Their pitching, of course, was and is excellent, and with Guzman back, Chris Carpenter looking good and Randy Myers, it will be even better this year. Their hitting has improved as well; Cruz, Green, Casco, Stanley and Delgado are all solid hitters in a lineup which will win a lot of 2-0 games.

3. New York. Can Chuck Knoblauch pitch? Because David Cone (arm surgery), David Wells (shoulder), Ramiro Mendoza (talent) and Hideki Irabu (head) can't. Good lineup, but overrated across the

board.

4. Baltimore. Baltimore has one regular under the age of 30, and he (Hammonds) isn't very good. That adds up to a disappointing season for a crumbling team.

5. Tampa Bay. Actually, not a bad team. Alvarez, Springer and Arrojo could be good and Sorrento, McGriff and Boggs make up a mediocre lineup. But not in the AL East.

AL CENTRAL

1. Detroit. Yes, that's right, Detroit. The Tigers improved 22 games last year with guys like Clark, Higginson, Thompson. With Encarnation coming up this year, their lineup will again be excellent, and their rotation, led by Thompson, is at least better than Cleveland's.

2. Cleveland. Pop quiz: name three good healthy Cleveland starters. Answer: Jaret Wright, Charles Nagy and... um...

3. Chicago. They've got three of the best players in baseball in Thomas, Ventura and Belle. Too bad their rotation consists of the most injury prone pitcher in the league (Bere), a promising pitcher who turned into a mediocre one (Baldwin), two unexciting rookies (Sirotka and Eyre) and Jamie Navarro as the staff "Ace"

4. Minnesota. Boy, the Twins suck.

If Todd Walker and Marty Cordova rebound from their terrible years, the Twins have potential to be mediocre, but don't count on it.

5. Kansas City. The only team worse than the Twinkies, now that Appier is out for a couple months, the Royals have no pitching to go along with their lack of hitting.

AL WEST

1. Anaheim. They finished four games out, and a year of experience for the young Angels will make up that difference. Look for Hill, Erstad, Greene and Finley to all have big years.

2. Seattle. They finished four games up on Anaheim, and a year of age for the aging Mariners will make up that difference. Look for Buhner, Johnson, and Moyer to have disappointing seasons, but they'll probably take the wild card anyway.

3. Oakland. With Hinch, Grieve and Tejeda, they're a couple of years away from reestablishing the old Athletic dynasty of the late 80s.

4. Texas. See 'Chicago.' Greer, Gonzalez and Pudge are great, but they simply don't have the pitching to win in a tough division. Burkett is not an acceptable staff ace.