

Tennis falls to top-10 foe Columbus State

By Matt Smith
Sports Editor

The Black and Gold tennis team dropped its fourth straight conference match March 13, falling 9-0 at UNCP's Varsity Tennis Courts to No. 8 Columbus State.

The Braves failed to record a point in their second-straight top-10 matchup, as the Braves were swept by the nation's top team in Armstrong Atlantic just four days before.

Columbus State allowed the Braves to take just seven combined games in singles action on their way to six straight

sweeps.

In No. 1 singles, UNCP junior Jenna McGary dropped a 6-1, 6-3 decision to Columbus State's Loriane Favoretto. The loss was McGary's fourth straight of the year after winning her last match in the Braves' sweep of Seton Hill on March 8.

Columbus State continued to roll in No. 2 singles action, as Tracy Castillo downed freshman Mia Winterbottom in straight sets 6-0, 6-0. Number 25 ranked Hanane Toumi took a 6-1, 6-0 win from Braves' junior Meredith Pierson in No. 3 singles.

The Cougar's winning trend continued throughout the match, as Sofia Persson defeated Maricel Quintero-Prieto 6-0, 6-0 in No. 4 doubles, and Black and Gold junior Janna Oxendine fell in No. 4 singles 6-0, 6-1 to Columbus State's Caterina Kiefer.

UNCP junior Christian Minnick closed up the Braves' singles actions with a 6-0, 6-1 loss to Andrea Redrado.

Doubles losses

Along with their six singles victories, Columbus State routed the Braves in all three doubles matches, winning by a

combined score of 21-6.

The Braves' tandem of McGary and Oxendine were downed in No. 1 doubles, falling to Favoretto and Toumi 8-3.

Pierson and Winterbottom fell 8-3 in No. 2 doubles to Castillo and Kiefer and Minnick and Quintero-Prieto lost 8-1 in No. 3 doubles to Persson and Gabriela Vasilescu.

The loss kept UNCP winless in the Peach Belt Conference and moved Columbus State to 5-1 in the PBC.

The win was the Cougars' third straight conference victory.



Photos by Matt Smith
Janna Oxendine (above) tosses up a serve in the Braves' match against Columbus State.

UNCP freshman Mia Winterbottom (left) prepares to return a shot against Columbus State. The Braves fell to the Cougars 9-0.



Braves fall short against NCCU

By Jared Leblanc
Asst. Sports Editor

The Black and Gold tennis team was dominated by the Eagles of North Carolina Central University 5-2 on Feb. 28.

Despite battling off illness Jenna McGary was able to pick up a victory (6-2, 3-2) at No. 1 singles for the Braves. Christian Minnick was able to pick up her third straight win (6-4, 4-6, 10-5) at No. 6

singles.

Even with the brilliant play by McGary and Minnick, the Black and Gold were unable to get any other wins. The loss was the Braves fifth in a row making their record go 1-5 overall. The win pushes the Division I NCCU record to 3-6 overall. The win was also the Eagles first win in an 11-match series with the Black and Gold.

The Braves played

under the rules of NCAA Division 1 tennis, where doubles matches count only as one point. On that note the Eagles marched though the Braves doubles teams winning 8-3 in No. 1 doubles, 8-0 in No. 2 doubles and 8-3 in No. 3 doubles.

The Black and Gold singles looked a lot like their doubles teams as they were not able to gain a spark. NCCU's Olesya Palko took the No.

2 singles match against Mia Winterbottom 6-1, 6-1. The usually sturdy Meredith Pierson fell to Cameron Chatman 6-1, 6-0 in No. 3 singles.

The loss was the Black and Gold's first defeat at the hands of a Division 1 opponent this year.

With the loss, the Braves move to 1-5 on the year, picking up their fifth straight loss to the Eagles in the defeat.



Photo by Matt Smith
UNCP junior Christian Minnick serves a ball to her opponent.



Photo by Matt Smith
Black and Gold junior Meredith Pierson keeps her eye on the ball as she prepares to return a shot.

Wingate blows past Braves 8-1 for fourth loss

By Matt Smith
Sports Editor

The UNCP tennis team suffered one of their worst defeats of the season Feb. 25, falling 8-1 at Wingate University for their fourth loss of the season.

The Braves' lone victory came in No. 4 singles action, as junior Janna Oxendine picked up a hard fought 6-4, 6-2 win over Wingate's Holly Alberghini to save the sweep.

The win was the first for the Bulldogs over UNCP since 2001, ending a six-match winning streak since Wingate last took a 7-2 win nine seasons ago.

The Braves began the day with a sluggish start, dropping all three of the

double matches to the Bulldogs to fall into an early 3-0 hole.

The Bulldog's Kelli Ferguson and Kara Stasikelis picked up an 8-5 win in No. 1 doubles over the Braves tandem of Oxendine and Pierson to put Wingate on the board first.

Alberghini and Samantha Alschlager picked up Wingate's second win of the day in No. 2 doubles, taking an 8-5 match against UNCP's Christian Minnick and Maricel Quintero-Prieto. The Bulldogs closed out the doubles' sweep in No. 3 doubles, as Wingate's Pierce Dillard and Ewa Opala took an easy 8-0 victory over the Black and Gold pair of Mia Winterbottom and Beverly Vause.

UNCP's poor play continued into singles action, as Wingate posted five singles victories to take the match.

In No. 1 singles, Winterbottom fell 7-6 (7-4), 6-4 to Stasikelis and in No. 2 singles, Pierson was swept in straight sets 6-2, 6-0 by Ferguson.

Quintero-Prieto faced the same fate in No. 3 singles, as Alschlager took a 6-2, 6-2 straight set victory.

UNCP closed the match with a 6-4, 6-2 loss in No. 5 singles as Minnick was overtaken by Wingate's Helen Goreshi and Vause was bested 6-0, 6-2 in No. 6 singles by Opala.

The loss moved the Braves' record to 1-4 in the early portion of the 2010 season.