

FSU Men Stun No. 11 North Carolina And Move On To The Semifinals Of The ACC Championship

FSU 4, UNC 2

April 21, 2006

FULL ACC COVERAGE HERE

[ACC CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT CENTRAL](#)

CARY, N.C - Down 3-0 in the third set, Florida State sophomore [Sam Chang](#) battled back and defeated North Carolina's Derek Porter (6-2, 0-6, 6-4) for the team win as the No. 19 Seminoles upset No. 11 North Carolina, 4-2, Friday afternoon at the Cary Tennis Center to hand the Tar Heels just their fourth loss of the season.

"I just tried to focus the whole time and not worry about the crowd," Chang said. "I wanted to just concentrate on the next point and just have fun out there. I was having a little bit of difficulty with my stomach and that really affected my body in the second set. In the third set I thought about playing for the seniors and my teammates and I knew I had to pull it out."

With the victory, No. 19 Florida State improved to 17-10 overall and advanced to the semifinals of the 2006 ACC Men's Tennis Championship at the Cary Tennis Center. The Tar Heels dropped to 23-4.

The Seminoles will face top-seeded and No. 3-ranked Duke (18-6) Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m.

Live stats will be available for the match.

An hour after capturing the final point for the Seminoles, Chang was whisked away in an ambulance with team trainers en route to the nearest hospital. For a team like FSU that prides itself in being well-conditioned, the 75-degree weather was not likely the cause of the agonizing cramping Chang endured. Whether, it was a physical symbol of the amount of pressure, emotion and intensity the entire Seminole squad tolerated for over four hours.

"I knew for us to win we'd need someone to come from behind, which was Sam," FSU head coach [Dwayne Hultquist](#) said. "I said before the match that we needed someone to close the match out which was Maciek. He really won convincingly. Finally, I knew we'd need someone to pour out emotion and that was [Chris Westerhof](#). He was down 6-5 at break and also he was down 6-4 in the tiebreaker so it was a huge win for him because we needed that point. North Carolina is not 23-4 for nothing so we have a lot of respect for them. We knew it would take a total team effort and we felt like we got that today."

In front of a standing-room only crowd made up of predominately Tar Heel fans, the Seminoles picked up the doubles point and later grabbed singles victories at Nos. 3, 4, and 5 as Florida State rolled to its fourth straight win. In fact, the Seminoles have won five of their last six outings, including victories over the No. 4 and No. 11 teams in the nation.

In doubles action, junior [Jonathas Sucupira](#) and Chang wasted little time overpowering the Lenny Gullan and David Stone team, 8-1, at No.2. The freshmen team of [Andrew Bailey](#) and [Maciek Sykut](#) then won five straight games and walked away with an impressive 8-4 win at No. 3 doubles for the first team point. The No. 21-ranked duo in the nation comprised of [Ytai Abougzir](#) and [Chris Westerhof](#) were even at 5-5 against the No. 10-ranked team of Raian Luchici and Brad Pomeroy before the match was halted.

"All three teams played really well in doubles and stepped it up," said Hultquist. "I thought Drew Bailey played really well today. He takes a lot of pride in his doubles game and he did exceptionally well. He made some really good volleys and overheads. I thought that was key for us. Also, Jon and Sam dominated and they beat them convincingly at No. 2. North Carolina has really good doubles teams so it was a huge accomplishment for us to clinch the point."



The Heels tied the team score at 1-1 after seventh-ranked Luchici got past the Seminoles No. 31-ranked Abougzir by scores of 6-4, 6-3. Shortly thereafter, the Seminoles' Sykut once again proved why he's one of the top freshmen in the nation today as he dominated at No. 4 singles, defeating Benjamin Carlotti 6-2, 6-2 as FSU took an early 2-1 lead. Sykut has now won nine of his last 10 singles matches.

Westerhof followed his teammate in a grueling second set that went into a tiebreaker in front of over 200 people. The native of Durban, South Africa, crushed Sebastian Guejman in the first set 6-0 before winning 7-6(6) in the second set. FSU went ahead 3-1 but UNC answered back at No. 6 as Aly Mandour defeated freshman [Chris Cloer](#) 6-4, 6-4.

"About the last month or so I have realized that my time playing time here at Florida State is coming to an end," Westerhof said. "I know it's all about how you finish and our team is playing unbelievable right now. We are fighting really hard and working really hard. We all want it. We have come so close with the ACC Tournament after making the finals last year so we know anyone can beat anyone. With the team we had today...we can definitely be a strong contender to win the ACC Championship."

[Maciek Sykut](#)

With the score 3-2, all eyes settled in on courts two and three as Sucupira was in the third-set of a marathon match against Pomeroy and Chang was in the third-set of a thriller against Derek Porter. Chang won the first set 6-2 but Porter defeated Chang 6-0 in the second and jumped ahead 3-0 in the third set. However, Chang refused to quit and fought back, eventually winning 6-4.

"If you look at our lineup, we are a team that is a lot better later in the year," Hultquist said. "At one point we were No. 38 in the country so we have had to scratch and claw back. I think we are on the bubble now whether we will host the first and second rounds of the NCAA Tournament. If we win tomorrow, it will put us in that position for sure. The match against Duke is important for several reasons. Not only is it against the No. 3 team in the nation and a chance for us to be in the ACC Championship finals, but it's our chance to host. There is a lot riding on that match."