



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FLORIDA STATE MEN'S TENNIS TAKES DOWN NO. 25 RICE

Tallahassee, Fla. The Florida state men's tennis team improved their record to 5-3, after upsetting No. 25 Rice on Feb. 19, by a count of 6-1. On their way to victory, the Seminoles swept all three doubles matches and all but one singles match. With the loss, the Owls fall to 5-2.

"It was really good. We have really practiced well for 2 weeks since the loss to Florida," said Florida State head coach **Dwayne Hultquist**, who was pleased with his team's performance. "The guys were committed to a level they've never been committed to before."

Going into today's match, Rice had won 32 of their last 33 doubles points, and were undefeated so far this season. Florida State, however, cruised past the Owls by sweeping all three matches. Finishing first was the No.3 Seminoles team of **Sam Chang** (Young-Ming, Taiwan) and **Chip Webb** (Chattanooga, TN), who never let up in their 8-1 win over Take Morita and Jason Mok.

The No.1 and 2 doubles flights came to an end almost simultaneously. The No. 1 team of **Mat Cloer** (Brevard, NC) and **Ytai Abougzir** (Boca Raton, FL) overcame a 0-2 deficit to win eight of the next ten games en route to an 8-4 win over Robert Searle and Ben Harknett. Meanwhile, the No. 2 doubles team of **Jeff Groslimond** (Atlanta, GA) and **Chris Westerhof** (Durban, South Africa) took down the Rice team of Tony Haerle and Filip Zivojinovic 8-3.

"They have won 32 of their last 33 doubles points and were undefeated this year...but we pulled it off," said Hultquist. "I thought No.2 and 3 doubles were the key because they got up early on."

Rice tied the match at 1-1 after Ralph Knupfer defeated Florida State's Jonathas Sucupira (Sao Paulo, Brazil) 6-2, 6-1 in the No. 5 singles match. It took the Seminoles little time to regain the lead however, as Chang cruised past Hoony Shin 6-1, 6-1 in No. 6 singles.

In No. 4 singles, Florida State's Westerhoff fell behind early to Rice's Zivojinovic 1-3, but came back to capture the first set 6-3 as part of a stretch of wins that lasted 9 games. Westerhof closed out his match by winning the second set 6-1.

In the day's deciding match, Cloer took down Searle of Rice 6-4, 6-3. Cloer lost in 2004 to Searle, but came out firing today to beat the former No. 11 player in the country. With Cloer's win, he is now tied with former Seminoles great Ty Braswell for seventh all time in career singles wins at FSU.

At the No. 3 singles spot, Groslimond came back after losing the first set 4-6 to Rice's Haerle to win his match 4-6, 6-2, 10-8. Closing out the day for the Seminoles was Abougzir, who defeated Haerle of Rice 6-3, 7-5 at the second singles spot to cap off the Seminole's 6-1 win over Rice.

Adding to the excitement of the match were the Florida State Marching Chiefs who played in the opening minutes of the afternoon's event. The band brought more enthusiasm to an already excited audience. Hultquist was pleased with the response of the crowd to the day's match.

"Here, in the crowd, you feel like you are part of it. It's your team."

The Seminoles return to the courts next Sunday, Feb. 27, to play Furman at the Scott Speicher Tennis Center. The match is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m.

#43 Florida State 6, #25 Rice 1

Box Score

Singles

No. 1: Mat Cloer (FSU) d. Robert Searle (Rice) 6-4, 6-3

No. 2: Ytai Abougzir (FSU) d. Tony Haerle (Rice) 6-3, 7-5

No. 3: #91 Jeff Groslimond (FSU) d. Ben Harknett (Rice) 4-6, 6-2, (10-8)

No. 4: Chris Westerhof (FSU) d. Filip Zivojinovic (Rice) 6-3, 6-1

No. 5: Ralph Knupfer (Rice) d. Jonathas Sucupira (FSU) 6-2, 6-1

No. 6: Sam Chang (FSU) d. Hoony Shin (Rice) 6-1, 6-1

Order of finish: 5, 6, 4, 1, 3, 2

Doubles

No. 1: Cloer/Abougzir (FSU) d. Searle/Harknett (Rice) 8-4

No. 2: Groslimond/Westerhof d. Haerle/Zivojinovic (Rice) 8-3

No. 3: Chang/Webb (FSU) d. Morita/Mok (Rice) 8-1

Order of finish: 3, 1, 2