



# FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

## DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **FSU MEN'S TENNIS ADVANCES IN NCAA TOURNAMENT WITH 4-0 SWEEP OF BALL STATE**

LEXINGTON, Ky. - With an average temperature of 67.2 degrees and only 5.4 inches of rain per month in Tallahassee, the Florida State University men's tennis team is not accustomed to playing indoors. Inclement weather forced Saturday's (May 14) match indoors at the Hilary J. Boone Tennis Complex at the University of Kentucky, but despite the lack of experience playing under a roof, the No. 18 Seminoles needed very little time to advance in the first round of the NCAA tournament as they beat No. 75 Ball State 4-0.

With the victory, the Tribe ran their record to 19-7 for the most wins since the 1985 edition posted a 25-4 mark. The Cardinals, an automatic qualifier from the Mid-American Conference, had their four-match winning streak snapped as their season ended at 20-9.

"We don't play indoors much and we've struggled a bit indoors so this was just one extra hurdle for us whereas Ball State plays indoors almost year-round," FSU head coach **Dwayne Hultquist** said. "With the length of time that we had in between matches (20 days) you get out of the habit of playing matches, but this was the perfect match for us. Ball State pushed us and they fought hard, but we didn't have to extend ourselves so we'll be fresh for the match tomorrow."

The win was Florida State's first indoors in over two years. Coming into Saturday's match, the Seminoles had dropped all three matches indoors this year and its last four as their previous indoor triumph was a 4-3 win over Georgia Tech at the 2003 ACC Tournament.

After losing the doubles point for just the second time this season to Virginia - who snapped FSU's streak of 18-straight wins - in the finals of the ACC Tournament, the Seminoles rebounded by taking the opening marker of the Cardinals.

Taking control of the bout at number one, **Jeff Groslimond** (Atlanta, Ga.) and **Chris Westerhof** (Durban, South Africa) picked up a break in the opening game and after a pair of holds, broke again for a 4-1 lead over Matt Laramore and Tony Epkey. The two teams traded serves for the next five games before the FSU junior duo broke at 7-3 for the 8-3 victory. The win was their 25th of the year, moving them up to second on the school's single-season win list and putting them one short of the record they set last season.

At number three, the match was much tighter as the two teams held their first four serves. Florida State's **Jonathas Sucupira** (Sao Paulo, Brazil) and **Chip Webb** (Chattanooga, Tenn.) seized an opening when they broke to go up 5-4 then won the next three points to beat Patrick Thompson and Jan Polhamus 8-4.

"I was impressed with how we played at number three doubles," Hultquist noted. "They had half of the No. 24 team in the country there and his partner is pretty good too, but we won pretty easily 8-4."

Once FSU won the doubles point, the match at number two between FSU's 40th-ranked **Mat Cloer** (Brevard, N.C.) and **Ytai Abougzir** (Boca Raton, Fla.) and Paul Newman and Clint Knable of Ball State was halted. Florida State held serve to go up 5-4.

Increasing Florida State's lead was Abougzir as he was the first one off the courts. The sophomore used two breaks in the final three games to take the first set then ran out to a 5-0 lead in the second before beating Epkey 6-3, 6-1.

"Ytai has won eight of last 11 matches coming in so we feel that he is playing well right now," Hultquist noted. "Epkey has a big serve, but once Ytai got adjusted to it he controlled the match from the ground and came up to the net to finish points."

Also winning his first set convincingly was Groslimond as he took the opening stanza 6-3 against Newman. Neither player could hold serve during the second set as there were six breaks in the first eight games. After holding to go up 6-5, Groslimond broke Newman for the 7-5 victory at number three.

Westerhof's grabbed the only break in the first set of his number four match with Knable and it made the difference as he won the opener 6-4. He would take three breaks in the second stanza on his way to a 6-2 win to close out the match and secure the team victory.

"We thought we would win at three and four with Jeff and Chris," Hultquist commented. "Jeff is really good in the pressure points and Chris is solid from the ground and once he got feel for what he wanted to do he took control of the match."

When the match was halted, Cloer was up a serve in the third set of his number one match with Laramore. The No. 26 player in the country took the first set 6-3, but dropped the second 6-1 before rallying for the 6-5 lead. Sucupira was down 3-2 on serve to Thompson at number five and Webb did not even have a chance to play a point versus Michael Heule at number six.

This is the second time in the last three years that Florida State has won its opening round NCAA Tournament match, but the Seminoles have never advanced past the second round. The Seminoles will face the winner of the Kentucky-Butler match at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

The win was also the 80th of Hultquist career as he became just the fourth coach in FSU lore to win 80 matches. Hultquist served as a graduate assistant during the 1991 season for Kentucky net boss Dennis Emery.

## **No. 18 Florida State 4, No. 75 Ball State 0**

### **Box Score**

#### **Singles**

No. 1: #26 Mat Cloer (FSU) vs. Matt Laramore (BSU) DNF

No. 2: Ytai Abougzir (FSU) def. Tony Epkey (BSU) 6-3, 6-1

No. 3: Jeff Groslimond (FSU) def. Paul Newman (BSU) 6-3, 7-5

No. 4: Chris Westerhof (FSU) def. Klint Knable (BSU) 6-4, 6-2

No. 5: Jonathas Sucupira (FSU) vs. Patrick Thompson (BSU) DNF

No. 6: Chip Webb (FSU) vs. Mike Heule (BSU) DNF

**Order of Finish: 2, 3, 4**

#### **Doubles**

No. 1: Groslimond/Westerhof (FSU) d. Laramore/Epkey (BSU) 8-3

No. 2: #40 Cloer/Abougzir (FSU) vs. Newman/Knable (BSU) DNF

No. 3: Sucupira/Webb (FSU) d. Thompson/ Jan Polhamus (BSU) 8-4

**Order of Finish: 1, 3**