

Unbeaten AU women's tennis team second seed at Empire 8 championships

10/05/04

ALFRED, NY The Alfred University women's tennis team, which recently completed its first-ever unbeaten and untied regular season, is the second seed in this weekend's Empire 8 Conference championship tournament. Alfred (9-0, 5-0 Empire 8) opens the championships Saturday, Oct. 9, at 9 a.m. against seventh-seeded Elmira at Nazareth College in Pittsford. Alfred played Elmira in its 2004 season opener and defeated the Soaring Eagles, 8-1. In the event of poor weather, AU will play Elmira at 12:30 p.m. Saturday at the Midtown Athletic Club, Rochester. If Alfred knocks off Elmira, the Lady Saxons will advance to Saturday's semifinals, where they will take on the winner of the Saturday quarterfinal matchup between third-seeded Nazareth and sixth-seeded St. John Fisher. That semifinal match is scheduled for 2 p.m. at Nazareth. If rain forces the match indoors, it will be played at 3 p.m. at the Midtown Athletic Club. Ithaca (5-4, 3-0 Empire 8) earned the top seed and will play eighth-seeded Utica Saturday morning at RIT. The other quarterfinal pits fourth-seeded RIT against the fifth seed, Hartwick. The Ithaca-Utica winner and the RIT-Hartwick winner play in Saturday's semifinal, set for 3:30 p.m. at RIT (3:30 p.m. at Midtown if it rains). The championship match is scheduled for 9 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 10, at Nazareth. Losers in the four quarterfinal matches and the two semifinals will play in the consolation round Saturday and Sunday at Nazareth and RIT. In the event of inclement weather, Sunday's championship match will be played at the Midtown Athletic Club at 11 a.m. Alfred went unbeaten for the first time since the 1991 team went 6-0-1. If Alfred can win two matches at the Empire 8 championships, it will equal the school single-season record for wins set by the 2001 team, which went 11-3 and placed third at the conference championships. AU would break the school single-season wins record by winning the tournament. The Lady Saxons bring some outstanding players to the conference championships. Senior Alicia Ballard (Burlington, VT/Burlington) enters the weekend with a perfect 9-0 record in first singles. A three-time First Team conference all-star and reigning conference Player of the Year, Ballard has a 41-5 career singles record. Freshman Katie Calfee (Kirkwood, MO/Kirkwood) and sophomore Jodi Butterfoss (Elizabethtown, PA/Elizabethtown) have been equally impressive. Calfee has gone 8-1 in second singles while Butterfoss is 9-0 in third singles. Butterfoss has a career singles record of 18-3. Alfred will need big contributions in fourth, fifth and sixth singles if the Lady Saxons hope to bring home a championship trophy. Junior Janice Brooks (The Bronx/Roosevelt), in fifth singles, and freshman Desiree Woods (Bradford, PA/Bradford Area), in sixth singles, have each gone 5-1. At fourth singles, three Lady Saxons have combined for a 2-7 mark. AU has played well in doubles, going a combined 16-5. Ballard and Butterfoss have a perfect 6-0 record and for their career have gone 14-1. Calfee and sophomore Jamie Drooz (Pittsford/Pittsford-Mendon) are 4-2 in second doubles. Three teams have combined for a 4-2 mark in third doubles, with Woods and senior Beth Harris (Alfred/Alfred-Almond) going 2-1. To view the Empire 8 Conference championship schedule on the web, please go to <http://www.alfred.edu/ath...>