

Warriors nip Hawks, reach state semis

Written by Tom Fruehling
Thursday, 28 May 2015 05:46 -



Washington sophomores Kelly King and Hannah Sherman were way late for their soccer team's match at Iowa City West Wednesday night. Once again.

They figure they've missed the start of about half of the Warriors' games this year, but always with a good excuse.

Rare two-sport athletes in the same season, King and Sherman spent four hours on tennis courts in Cedar Rapids Wednesday afternoon and into the evening.

Both were key players in Washington's hard-fought 5-3 win over a tough Prairie squad in the quarterfinals of the Class 2A state team tennis tournament played at both Jefferson High School and the Veterans Memorial Tennis Center.

Each of them won her singles match handily.

Then King teamed with senior Jennifer Greif for one doubles victory. Playing with savvy senior team leader Lilly Hartman, Sherman nailed the winning tiebreaker shot in the No. 1 doubles match to clinch the Warrior victory.

They'll now attempt to defend their state 2A team title next week in a four-team field in Iowa City, where Sherman and King headed Wednesday night for soccer.

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“We might get there for the last 20 minutes,” Sherman said.

But, King explained, “We’ve got four girls injured so we don’t have many subs. We’ve been doing this all year and last season, too.”

Needless to say, they were needed on the tennis court.

Washington came into Wednesday’s tourney match at 17-1 with its only loss at the hands of undefeated Iowa City High. The up-and-coming Prairie girls were 13-2, having also lost to the Little Hawks in addition to a 5-4 dual defeat to Washington 12 days ago.

For the rematch, however, Prairie was without No. 2 player Magui Caro, a junior who teams with No. 1 sophomore sister Vale to form a formidable doubles tandem.



“She came down with mono last week,” Vale said of her older sister. “We beat their doubles team the last time. But it was harder this time without her.”

The two have played together for years, first as little girls in their native Argentina and in the five years since their father Gustavo’s job with Dupont brought them to Cedar Rapids.

“We’ve played together so much, we always know what the other one is doing on the court,” said Vale.

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By herself, she had no trouble dispatching an admittedly lethargic Hartman, 6-0 6-1, in No. 1 singles on Wednesday.

"I've played against her a lot, and I know she likes to hit down the line," said Caro, who has qualified for state singles next week. "I just tried to move her from side to side and wait for her to miss."

Hartman, a four-year veteran who qualified with Sherman in doubles for the state meet, acknowledged she played poorly.

"Vale is a great player," she said. "And I never did get in a rhythm."

With nail-biting wins also coming for Prairie from senior Michelle Grenn and junior Lauren O'Brian at the bottom of the lineup, the match was tied up after singles competition.

"We're 3-3, baby," Prairie Coach Scott Legatt told his troops. "We had to get one of those last wins, and getting two was a bonus."

Noted his coaching counterpart, Washington's Spencer Eels, "Things were a little hairy at that point."

King and Greif (both of them state qualifiers in singles) put the Warriors ahead with a 6-4, 7-5 No. 2 doubles match over the Hawks' doubles state qualifiers Karleigh Schilling and Anna Postnikov.

It then came down to Hartman and Sherman against Caro and replacement partner Grenn.

The Prairie duo won the first set 6-4, but the Warriors rebounded in the second 6-3. Washington

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then claimed the match-deciding tiebreaker, 10-7, when Sherman rifled a liner into the far corner for the win.

“Lilly carried me the whole way,” Sherman said. “If I made an error she just wouldn’t let me get down on myself.”

For Hartman, revenge was sweet after her lackluster singles play. “I just played like I was starting over,” she said. “I wanted to stay strong and positive for both of us. And it was good to win as a team.”

Des Moines Roosevelt, Urbandale and Pleasant Valley will join Washington for the last two rounds of the state tournament on Saturday, June 6 at the Hawkeye Tennis & Recreation Complex in Iowa City.

WASHINGTON 5, PRAIRIE 3

Singles

1. Vale Caro (P) def. Lilly Hartman, 6-1, 6-1
2. Hannah Sherman (W) def. Karleigh Schilling, 6-0, 6-1
3. Kelly King (W) def. Shannon Costigan, 6-0, 6-1
4. Jennifer Greif (W) def. Anna Postnikov, 6-0, 6-0
5. Michelle Grenn (P) def. Eliza Sundermann, 6-2, 1-6, 1-0
6. Lauren O'Brian (P) def. Laura Gibson, 6-4, 6-4

Doubles

1. Hartman/Sherman (W) def. Caro/Grenn, 4-6, 6-2, 1-0
2. King/Greif (W) def. Schilling/Postnikov, 6-4, 7-5
3. Sundermann/Caroline Berg (W) vs O'Brian/Madie Renner (did not finish)