

Falcons, Hawks hope to finish on plus side of .500

Spring break came at just the right time for the Farmington High tennis team.

The Falcons opened the season with losses to Livonia Stevenson, Berkley and North Farmington, and coach Keith Morrison hopes his team makes a quick turnaround when play resumes Monday.

"I think we still have time," he said. "It's a matter of this team working hard and cooperating."

By cooperating, Morrison means that player attitudes and actions need to fall in line. The fourth-year mentor was forced to bench several players for the season opener for disciplinary reasons.

BOYS TENNIS

Farmington is coming off a solid 1997 campaign in which the Falcons finished third in the Western Lakes Activities Association tournament. Farmington was above .500 in dual meets.

Several top players from that squad graduated, including No. 1 singles player Wado Clark and Scott May, a top doubles player.

The Falcons will fill those voids with experienced players. Senior Daniel Odendaal moves into the top singles position. A four-year player, he has numerous strengths on the court.

"He's strongest at the begin-

ning of matches," Morrison said, adding Odendaal needs to work on his concentration and his focus for the entire match. "He has good ground strokes and volleys well."

Senior Chris Lee will play No. 2 singles. He is also a four-year player and covers the court like a blanket, according to Morrison.

"This kid is so fast," he said. "If he uses his head, he can bring in a lot of wins."

At third singles, Randy Hassan gets the call. He played fourth singles a year ago and posted a better than .500 record. "Randy is a very patient player," Morrison said. "He lets his opponents beat themselves. He

plays smart."

Senior Brandon Welling will be Farmington's No. 4 singles player. He's a strong player but needs to place shots instead of blasting them, Morrison said.

"The game is about making shots," he added, "not how hard you hit."

Junior Brandon Mytty and senior Dave Milewski fill the No. 1 doubles slot. Morrison said they have yet to hit their stride.

"It's just a matter of them jelling," he said.

Juniors Ben Broder and Eric Bruce play at No. 2 doubles. Morrison said the duo has played well thus far despite winning just one match.

Farmington will be young at third and fourth doubles.

Sophomore Dan Turkovich, who missed all of last season with an injury, and freshman Shamik Trivedi play No. 3.

"They've been a little nervous, but they can play," Morrison said. "I think they'll be a strong team in time."

Freshmen Hemanth Srivivasi and Hirinder Gill are the No. 4 doubles players. Morrison said Tom Mahon and Raj Bir also will work at that position.

Farmington Harrison

Like Farmington, the Hawks are off to a relatively slow start in the standings.

Harrison dropped its first two matches to Northville (8-0) and Birmingham Groves (7-1) but rebounded to beat Westland John Glenn (8-2).

First-year coach Carl Badynee is optimistic about his squad despite the 1-2 start.

"It has been a dream season so far," he said.

Badynee was referring to the attitudes of his players. He said the Hawks have displayed a solid work ethic, and parents have been very supportive, too.

"I couldn't be in a better situation," Badynee said.

This season is his first as a varsity tennis coach. Badynee has coached volleyball at Taylor Kennedy and Southgate Aquinas.

He inherits a young Harrison squad. With just a handful of seniors, the Hawks, who tied for fifth place in the WLAA tournament, are dominated by sophomores.

The entire singles lineup is comprised of sophomores. Ryan Shade leads the pack.

He played top singles a year ago and looks much improved, according to Badynee. Shade is a year-round player with unlimited potential.

"Ryan is one of the most intelligent players you'll see," Badynee said. "Everything revolves around his serve. When his serve is on, he's on."

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