



THE CHARGER

READY FOR REGIONALS

Tennis team prepares for postseason meet at Hillsboro

Lauren a Schutter | sports editor

The tennis team travels to Hillsboro Friday to compete in this year's regional competition.

The meet takes place Friday and Saturday, with the majority of the small team competing. Senior Mayah Mumpower and junior Baylie Tharman will compete in singles, while freshmen Meredith Denton and Ava Huske will join senior Sarah Vanstory and junior Danielle Murphy in doubles.

Mayah Mumpower is feeling ready after a successful regular season, sporting an 18-8 record in singles. "I think I'm at a good place going into regionals," Mumpower said, "The tennis meet at Lawrence was a good test since quite a few of the teams there are also in our regionals." Head coach Brendan Praeger said "Mayah has improved so much over the course of the year in singles, and focused on so many different shots to make them better. She's just a more complete player than she has been the last few years."

Sophomore Baylie Tharman has switched between singles and doubles this year, but will compete in singles for regionals. "She has improved so much more this year than last year," Praeger said. "Since she is a dual-sport athlete she doesn't get as much practice time

as the other players, but we've made it work well this season. Her serves and athleticism should help carry her. She has a shot at winning her first round match and being in the mix for a spot at state."

Sarah Vanstory and Danielle Murphy have also improved a lot throughout the year, according to Praeger. "They are both upper-classmen with little varsity time coming into the year, so it's not a surprise that they are playing much better as a pair than they were for the early meets," Praeger said. They earned a silver medal in #2 doubles at the final varsity meet in Chapman, and went 3-1 at Perry-Lecompton to finish at the top of the consolation bracket in a competitive 16-team field. "They've improved their teamwork and knowledge and just need to eliminate unforced errors."

Meredith Denton and Ava Huske have had extreme improvement this year, and are not playing like freshmen, according to Praeger. "They really stepped up after being thrown into varsity meets. Their record is also better if you look at the most recent meets. Ava played a lot of singles, but we have them back together for the post-season. They have fantastic serves and we'll work on being really aggressive at the net to give them a good chance at upsetting someone

in the bracket."

The regional tournament is set up as a 16-team bracket with a few play-in games. In order to play at state, competitors need to place within the top 6. Players who lose the first match are done, so the pressure is on right away. "We play full matches, two out of three sets, and full deuce, which we have only done at one other meet. Our team plays a tough schedule and has several all-day meets, so we'll be ready to go," Praeger said.

Teams competing in this regional include Wabaunsee, Hesston, Hillsboro, Smoky Valley, Marysville, Perry-Lecompton, Kansas City Christian, Rossville, Sabetha, Sacred Heart, and Maranatha Christian Academy.

As far as the competition goes, the regional will house returning doubles state champions from Sacred Heart, as well as several state qualifiers from Smoky Valley, Maranatha, Hesston and Marysville, which makes this meet just that much more difficult. "This is arguably the most difficult regional in the state, almost every year," coach Praeger said, "but our players have a good shot. If we catch some breaks with seeding and play up to our potential we can have a great meet."

State will be held the following weekend in Maize.



Senior Mayah Mumpower serves at Chapman September 28. Mumpower enters regionals with an 18-8 singles record. The regional meet at Hillsboro begins at 10 a.m. Friday. Photo by Danielle Murphy.

Gay-Straight Alliance club aims to create accepting environment for all

The addition of a Gay-Straight Alliance Club at WHS is long overdue.

At the most recent board meeting, USD 329 approved the founding of a Gay-Straight Alliance club. Officially, the board approved the consent agenda which included the item "Per BOE policy & Federal law grant equal access to a non-school sponsored Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) club." There was no controversy in the discussion for the establishment of this club, and there really shouldn't be.

We would like to emphasize the fact that it falls under the category of a non-curricular club. Non-curriculum related clubs, referred to in district policy as "non-school sponsored clubs," are simply clubs that don't relate directly to school curriculum. They may have political or religious affiliation like Fellowship of Christian Athletes. The school provides a space and an opportunity for them to operate, but doesn't endorse or support them financially like they may with traditional clubs. The school requires a faculty member or an approved adult to supervise the group's activities.

Junior Kwinton Willier proposed the club to the board, to be sponsored by art teacher Brianna Guinn and Spanish teacher/mental health liaison David Amer. Willier prepared a statement that included his reasons for the club and its purpose.

Its mission statement is as follows. "Our mission is to work towards a more accepting environment for all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity through education, support, social action, and advocacy. We believe that schools can be truly safe ONLY when every student is assured of access to an education without fear of harassment or violence."

We believe that mission is an important one for our community.

In his statement, Willier addressed the need for the club at WHS.

"Many people that are a part of the LGBTQ+ community are afraid to 'come out of the closet.'" These people are especially in need of a safe area to be at when they do decide to "come out". As a result of the article in the newspaper this last year, people have been afraid of what others will

think and say of them, their mental and physical wellbeing. Within the GSA club, students would have a safe place and be with people they know that won't judge them and create a network of students who will support their needs."

The public response to a story about Pride month, published in June, does demonstrate some prejudice in the community. While most of the controversy focused on an image that some deemed disrespectful to the military, numerous emails and social media comments made it clear that some people in our community take issue with members of the LGBTQ community discussing their lives at all.

Posters advertising the first meeting were posted in the school last week, and by Friday most of them had been torn down, so it's not a stretch to say the club has some work to do to achieve its goals.

We think all students should feel comfortable enough in the school and community to be their true selves, and if this club helps encourage that, it's a worthwhile endeavor.

The club's first meeting is during adviser base October 8.

Destructive behavior reflects poorly on students

"Devious licks," the newest TikTok challenge, has students destroying and stealing school property across the country.

This challenge has unruly students knocking stalls over, breaking sinks, taking paper towel dispensers off the walls and stealing soap dispensers. Most of the damage has been in bathrooms due to the inability to have any form of security.

Several Kansas schools have restricted bathroom use to prevent anymore of their bathrooms from being destroyed. According to student media, Lawrence High School is down to three bathrooms. All but two bathrooms in Manhattan High School West campus are closed and most are closed on the East campus.

Students across the country that have participated in this trend have been arrested on misdemeanor vandalism charges. Theft or damage of properties that add up to over \$1,000 are a felony.

While it may not be directly related to the Tik Tok trend,

this type of behavior has unfortunately also turned up at Wabaunsee High School.

There was a recent incident with the high school volleyball team in a locker room at a host school.

Personal property was stolen, as well as some other mischievous activities. Law enforcement and administration talked to the volleyball team last week about how this type of behavior is not acceptable and could result in more serious repercussions.

We're glad that people in charge are taking it seriously, but unfortunately, some of the players still think it's being blown out of proportion. We disagree.

Anytime something like theft or destruction of property happens it reflects poorly on everyone — and we're all responsible for putting a stop to it. Team leaders are responsible for modeling and encouraging good behavior, and to an extent, everyone is responsible for the actions of their peers.

As for property at our own school, our buildings have enough issues without further destruction. It's not worth damaging something for a mildly amusing Tik Tok.

The editorial is the opinion of the Charger staff. Send letters to the editor to whscharger@gmail.com.