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LIU Brooklyn's Sanne Louwers Voted NEC Women's Tennis Player of the Year

Somerset, NJ -- After just missing out on the award in each of her first two years, LIU Brooklyn junior **Sanne Louwers (Nuenen, Netherlands/Mgr. Cuytenlaan)** added Northeast Conference Women's Tennis Player of the Year to her growing list of honors in a vote of league head coaches. Three-time reigning NEC champion Fairleigh Dickinson was recognized as well with freshman **Ksenija Tihomirova (Riga, Latvia)** voted NEC Rookie of the Year and **Jonathan Buchman** taking home his second straight NEC Coach of the Year honor.

Louwers, now a three-time All-NEC honoree and former NEC Rookie of the Year, became the fourth LIU Brooklyn player in the last nine years to earn NEC Player of the accolades. She joined two-time winner Selma Babic (2009, 2010) and Jessica Loose (2006). Louwers, who hails from Nuenen in the Netherlands, concluded her junior year with a 14-8 mark and posted a 10-5 record in #1 singles play. She won eight of her last nine matches to end the season and racked up five wins without a loss against conference opposition. Louwers has won nearly 72 percent of her matches since stepping foot on campus with a 41-16 record over her three years in Brooklyn. Against NEC competition, she has amassed a 13-1 career mark.

Tihomirova joined teammate Nicole Chis (2013) and all-time FDU great Julija Korsunova (2007) as Knights who have earned the NEC Rookie of the Year award. Stepping directly into the #1 singles spot, Tihomirova found immediate success, winning the Bill & Sandra Moore Classic at Navy last September. She was tabbed the NEC Player and Rookie of the Month in September, and went on to win three NEC Rookie of the Week awards and an NEC Player of the Week honor in the spring. After winning her first NEC championship earlier this month, the Riga, Latvia native heads into NCAA Tournament play with a 17-8 overall mark and 9-4 record at #1 singles. She also finished 4-1 versus NEC competitors.

Buchman has now been honored by his peers as the NEC's top coach in each of his two years since taking over the FDU program. Under his direction, the Knights became the fourth team in NEC history to three-peat as league champion with a 4-0 win over LIU Brooklyn in the title match on April 19. The Knights return to the NCAA Tournament next month and enter the postseason with a 13-4 dual meet record. FDU won all seven of its NEC matches in 2013-14, and did not drop a singles or a doubles match in rolling to three consecutive 4-0 victories in the NEC Tournament. All six FDU singles players earned All-NEC recognition along with a pair of doubles teams.

Louwers was joined by teammate **Marine Dans (Waterloo, Belgium/Institu de Mot Couvreur)** (#3 singles) on the All-NEC first team. FDU was lauded at the #4, #5 and #6 spots with sophomore **Gisela Castany (Barcelona, Spain)**, junior **Mariya Krachok (Kiev, Ukraine)** and senior **Manuela Leme (Varginha, Brazil/E.E. Antania Alves Cruz)** earning honors, respectively. Bryant freshman **Ryan Brown (Austin, TX/Lake Travis)** rounded out the first team at #2 singles.

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Brown was one of two freshman to earn first team All-NEC honors, and deservedly so following a 13-7 campaign. The 13 wins marked a team-high, and her 10 victories (against just five setbacks) were the second-most in the conference at the #2 position. Brown also went 3-1 in NEC matches and ended the campaign with five straight wins. She was a two-time NEC Rookie of the Week and the NEC Player of the Week on April 1.

Dans wrapped a spectacular freshman campaign this April with a pair of wins in the NEC Tournament. She ended her season having won 13 straight matches and finished 14-1 on the year. All but one of her league-high 14 victories at the #3 flight came in straight sets and in her last 11 matches dropped just 34 games. Dans finished with the highest winning percentage in the NEC on the year, winning 93.3 percent of her outings. She was also a perfect 5-0 in conference matches.

Castany made herself right at home in her first year at FDU. She has tallied an NEC-best 25 victories heading into NCAA play and her 10-1 mark in #4 flight competition marks the most wins in the flight in the conference. The 25 wins are also the most by an NEC player since the Conference began tracking statistics in 2004-05. Castany, who has won seven in a row, was triumphant in all six of her league matches.

Krachok was another FDU player who made a stellar debut in 2013-14. She came up clutch down the stretch for the Knights, winning seven straight and 13 of her last 14 matches, culminating in a trio of straight set victories at the NEC Tournament. She is 20-8 on the year and went 6-0 versus the NEC. Krachok has also won a conference-high 13 matches at the #5 flight against just two defeats.

The team's lone senior, Leme provided a veteran presence on an FDU team that featured four newcomers in the starting lineup. She earned the second All-NEC first team honor of her career after posting a 5-0 mark against league rivals. Over her four years, Leme has posted a 19-4 NEC record and won 58 matches in total.

FDU claimed two of the three first team All-NEC doubles awards. **Gisela Castany (Barcelona, Spain)** and **Ksenija Tihomirova (Riga, Latvia)** collected #1 flight honors, while **Mariya Krachok (Kiev, Ukraine)** and sophomore **Nicole Chis (Highland Park, NJ/Highland Park)** were recognized at #2 doubles. The LIU Brooklyn tandem of **Marine Dans (Waterloo, Belgium/Institu de Mot Couvreur)** and junior **Nancy Zonneveld (Frankfurt, Germany/European School Frankfurt)** emerged as the #3 flight honorees.

Castany and Tihomirova seemed to get better as the year progressed for FDU, concluding the NEC Tournament on a seven-match win streak. Overall, the team has posted a 12-5 record, highlighted by an 11-4 mark at the #1 spot. The duo also won five-of-six NEC matches, two of which came in the NEC semifinals and championship match.

Krachok and Chis are riding a five-match win streak which included three NEC Tournament victories. The tandem is 7-3 on the year and went a perfect 6-0 in conference play. Chis also earned first team doubles recognition a year ago along with Anna Rapoport.

The team of Dans and Zonneveld didn't start teaming until March, but proved to be a solid combo, finishing with a 7-4 overall record and 3-1 ledger versus NEC teams. The duo also won a pair of matches in the NEC Tournament. Zonneveld previously earned second team doubles honors back in 2012 as a freshman along with Lisa Maas.

Fairleigh Dickinson led the way on the All-NEC singles second team with three honorees. Along with NEC Rookie of the Year **Ksenija Tihomirova (Riga, Latvia)**, the #1 singles award winner, the Knights were also honored at the #2 and #3 positions with **Shreya Pasricha (India)** and **Nicole Chis (Highland Park, NJ/Highland Park)**, respectively. LIU Brooklyn freshman **Isabella Wagener (Luxembourg/Lyceé Classique Diekirch)** was the pick at the #4 spot, Sacred Heart junior **Nicole Rydzewski (Maspeth, NY/St. Francis Prep)** was voted in at #5 singles and Saint Francis U freshman **Brittani Jentz (Plano, TX/Ursuline Academy of Dallas)** achieved all-star status at the #6 flight.

Pasricha was yet another FDU newcomer who excelled at a high level in 2013-14. The NEC Rookie of the Month last October, Pasricha enters her first NCAA Championship with an 18-8 overall record. She posted a straight set #2 flight victory in the NEC title match for the Knights.

Chis made it back-to-back second team All-NEC honors as one of the “veterans” on a young and talented FDU team. Coming off an NEC Rookie of the Year campaign, Chis lifted her play and ended the NEC Tournament with a 21-7 overall mark. She has won eight straight matches, while posting a 6-1 record at #3 singles and 5-0 ledger in NEC competition.

Wagener joined teammate Marine Dans as LIU freshman who earned All-NEC recognition. She solidified the #4 singles spot for the NEC runner-up Blackbirds, winning five of her seven league matches, including a pair of victories in the NEC quarterfinals and semifinals.

Rydzewski became the first Sacred Heart singles honoree since Delaney Downing in 2010. She won eight of her last nine matches to close out her junior season and finished 13-6 overall. Rydzewski went 9-2 in #5 flight play and 4-1 against conference competition. She was named NEC Rookie of the Week on April 8.

Jentz now holds the distinction of being the first player in Saint Francis U history to collect All-NEC singles honors. She finished her freshman season with a 13-5 overall record and 2-1 NEC mark. Jentz won six of her last seven matches, including an NEC Tournament quarterfinal victory.

Bryant's **Ryan Brown (Austin, TX/Lake Travis)** added to her honors by being voted second team All-NEC doubles at the #1 spot along with junior **Rosie Bird (Hamilton, New Zealand/Hillcrest)**. Saint Francis U accounted for the #2 and #3 flight honorees. Sophomore **Danielle Gryckiewicz (Calgary, Alberta/Calgary Academy)** and junior **Alex Sachs (Parkland, FL/Stoneman Douglas)** earned #2 flight recognition, while junior **Lucy Jasso (San Luis Potosi, Mexico/Instituto Potosino)** and freshman **Brittani Jentz (Plano, TX/Ursuline Academy of Dallas)** were the #3 flight winners.

Brown and Bird won a pair of matches for Bryant in the NEC Tournament to improve to 4-1 within the conference and 6-4 on the year. Bird previously claimed second team doubles honors teaming with Devlin-Ann Ammendola at the #3 position as a freshman.

The Gryckiewicz and Sachs duo, and Jasso and Jentz pairing marked the first-ever All-NEC doubles honors for Saint Francis U.

Gryckiewicz and Sachs were nearly unbeatable this past season, finishing 12-2 overall and 11-1 at the #2 position. The tandem posted the highest doubles winning percentage (.857) in the NEC and the 11 wins were the most by a #2 flight team. They won four-of-five NEC matches as the Red Flash advanced to the NEC semifinals for the first time in program history.

Jasso and Jentz dropped just one match in 2013-14, ending the year with a 6-1 mark. The duo won all three of their NEC matches, including a victory in the NEC quarterfinals.

About The Northeast Conference

Now in its 33rd year, the Northeast Conference is an NCAA Division I collegiate athletic association consisting of 10 institutions of higher learning located throughout six states. Media coverage of the NEC extends to four of the largest markets in the United States - New York (#1), Pittsburgh (#23), Baltimore (#27), and Hartford/New Haven (#30). Founded in 1981 as the basketball-only ECAC Metro Conference, the NEC has grown to sponsor 22 championship sports for men and women and now enjoys automatic access to 14 different NCAA Championships. NEC member institutions include Bryant, Central Connecticut, Fairleigh Dickinson, LIU Brooklyn, Mount St. Mary's, Robert Morris, Sacred Heart, St. Francis Brooklyn, Saint Francis U and Wagner. For more information on the NEC, visit the league's official website (www.northeastconference.org) and digital network (www.necfrontrow.com), or follow the league on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Google+, all @NECsports.

2014 NEC Women's Tennis Award Winners

NEC Player of the Year

Sanne Louwers	LIU Brooklyn	Jr	Nuenen, Netherlands/Mgr. Cuytenlaan
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NEC Rookie of the Year

Ksenija Tihomirova	Fairleigh Dickinson	Fr	Riga, Latvia
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NEC Coach of the Year

Jonathan Buchman	Fairleigh Dickinson
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2014 NEC Women's Tennis First Team All-Conference

Singles

Flight	Name	School	Yr	Hometown/High School
#1	Sanne Louwers	LIU Brooklyn	Jr	Nuenen, Netherlands/Mgr. Cuytenlaan
#2	Ryan Brown	Bryant	Fr	Austin, TX/Lake Travis
#3	Marine Dans	LIU Brooklyn	Fr	Waterloo, Belgium/Institu de Mot Couvreur
#4	Gisela Castany	Fairleigh Dickinson	So	Barcelona, Spain
#5	Mariya Krachok	Fairleigh Dickinson	Jr	Kiev, Ukraine
#6	Manuela Leme	Fairleigh Dickinson	Sr	Varginha, Brazil/E.E. Antania Alves Cruz

Doubles

#1	Gisela Castany Ksenija Tihomirova	Fairleigh Dickinson Fairleigh Dickinson	So Fr	Barcelona, Spain Riga, Latvia
#2	Nicole Chis Mariya Krachok	Fairleigh Dickinson Fairleigh Dickinson	So Jr	Highland Park, NJ/Highland Park Kiev, Ukraine
#3	Marine Dans Nancy Zonneveld	LIU Brooklyn LIU Brooklyn	Fr Jr	Waterloo, Belgium/Institu de Mot Couvreur Frankfurt, Germany/European School Frankfurt

2014 NEC Women's Tennis Second Team All-Conference

Singles

Flight	Name	School	Yr	Hometown/High School
#1	Ksenija Tihomirova	Fairleigh Dickinson	Fr	Riga, Latvia
#2	Shreya Pasricha	Fairleigh Dickinson	Fr	India
#3	Nicole Chis	Fairleigh Dickinson	So	Highland Park, NJ/Highland Park
#4	Isabella Wagener	LIU Brooklyn	Fr	Luxembourg/Lycees Classique Diekirch
#5	Nicole Rydzewski	Sacred Heart	Jr	Maspeth, NY/St. Francis Prep
#6	Brittani Jentz	Saint Francis U	Fr	Plano, TX/Ursuline Academy of Dallas

Doubles

#1	Ryan Brown Rosie Bird	Bryant Bryant	Fr Jr	Austin, TX/Lake Travis Hamilton, New Zealand/Hillcrest
#2	Danielle Gryckiewicz Alex Sachs	Saint Francis U Saint Francis U	So Jr	Calgary, Alberta/Calgary Academy Parkland, FL/Stoneman Douglas
#3	Lucy Jasso Brittani Jentz	Saint Francis U Saint Francis U	Jr Fr	San Luis Potosi, Mexico/Instituto Potosino Plano, TX/Ursuline Academy of Dallas