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Dog Day Afternoon: Bryant Sweeps NEC Men's & Women's Tennis Championships

West Windsor, NJ -- It was a great day to be a Bulldog. On a historic day for Bryant, the Bulldogs pulled off a sweep of the men's and women's crowns at the 2015 NEC Tennis Championships. The Bryant men won their second straight title with a 4-3 victory over perennial NEC power Fairleigh Dickinson in yet another instant classic between the two programs, while the women won their first conference championship with a 4-0 triumph over top-seeded LIU Brooklyn. With the wins, Bryant became the 11th school in league history to pull off a finals sweep. The championship event, for the 15th straight year, was contested at the Mercer County Tennis Center in West Windsor, New Jersey.

The second-seeded Bryant women were firing on all cylinders in the program's first finals appearance. After earning the doubles point against top-seeded LIU, the Bulldogs went up 2-0 on the strength of senior **Rosie Bird's (Hamilton, New Zealand/Hillcrest)** 6-1, 6-0 win at #6 singles. Sophomore **Ryan Brown (Austin, TX/Lake Travis)** won her third straight NEC Tournament match in impressive fashion, defeating reigning NEC Player of the Year **Sanne Louwers (Nunen, Netherlands/Mgr. Cuytenlaan)**, 6-2, 6-1, at the #1 spot. With the Bulldogs within a point of clinching, all eyes were on Bryant's **Linnea Sjoberg (Stockholms lan, Sweden)**. And when the freshman claimed a 6-2, 6-1 win at the #3 flight, the celebration began for 15th-year head coach Barbara Cilli and her team. In its two previous NEC Tournament appearances, the Bulldogs had been ousted in the quarterfinal (2013) and semifinal (2014) rounds.

Emotions were sky high during a memorable men's tennis final that served as a rubber match between the two programs. FDU won the NEC title in 2013 and Bryant returned the favor a year ago, both by 4-3 final scores. The competitive nature of this year's final was no different. Top-seeded Bryant took the doubles point this time around, and raced out to a 3-0 lead after wins by freshman **Luke Lorenz (Colorado Springs, CO/Discovery Canyon Campus)** (6-4, 6-3) and **Jorge Ortiz-Garcia (Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico)** (6-3, 6-4) at the #3 and #6 flights, respectively. There was no quit in second-seeded FDU as freshman **Diego Garnel (Lisbon, Portugal/Carcavelos Tennis)** posted a 7-6, 6-4 victory at #5 singles, and after sophomore **Jacob Whalley (Wirral, England/Caldy Grange Grammar School)** won 6-4, 6-2 at the #2 spot, the Knights pulled to within 3-2 with two matches still on the courts. In a heavyweight battle between two of the NEC's top players, three-time NEC Player of the Year **Arvis Berzins (Adazi, Latvia/Riga Centre Language School)** of FDU knocked off Bryant freshman **Matt Kuhar (Smithfield, RI/Smithfield)** to knot the score at 3-all. At this point, everyone's focus shifted to the #4 match between Bryant's **Oliver Welsh (San Diego, CA/Lauren Springs)** and FDU's **Gonzalo Quintana (Guayaquil, Ecuador/Colegio Particular Pert)**. Quintana won 6-4 in the first set, but Welsh bounced back for a 6-4 win in set two. With the score tied at 5-5, and with Quintana battling cramps, Welsh was able to grind out the final two games for a 7-5 third set victory and begin the raucous celebration for ninth-year head coach Ron Gendron and his charges.

Bryant joins FDU (1988, 2012 and 2013), UMBC (2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003) and Quinnipiac (2004, 2005 and 2006) as teams that came away with an NEC finals sweep.

The Bryant men and women will now go on to represent the NEC in the upcoming NCAA Championships in mid May.

2015 NEC Tennis Championships at Mercer County Tennis Center, West Windsor, NJ

Friday, April 17

Women's Quarterfinals

- #1 LIU Brooklyn 4, #8 St. Francis Brooklyn 1
- #2 Bryant 4, #7 Wagner 0
- #3 Saint Francis U 4, #6 Mount St. Mary's 1
- #5 Fairleigh Dickinson 4, #4 Sacred Heart 3

Men's Quarterfinals

- #2 Fairleigh Dickinson 4, #7 St. Francis Brooklyn 0
- #3 Saint Francis U 4, #6 Sacred Heart 0
- #5 Wagner 4, #4 Mount St. Mary's 0

Saturday, April 18

Women's Semifinal Matches

- #1 LIU Brooklyn 4, #5 Fairleigh Dickinson 2
- #2 Bryant 4, #3 Saint Francis U 1

Men's Semifinal Matches

- #1 Bryant 4, #5 Wagner 0
- #2 Fairleigh Dickinson 4, #3 Saint Francis U 0

Sunday, April 19

Women's Championship Match

- #2 Bryant 4, #1 LIU Brooklyn 0

Men's Championship Match

- #1 Bryant 4, #2 Fairleigh Dickinson 3



2015 Northeast Conference Men's & Women's Tennis Championships

April 17-19

at Mercer County Tennis Center, West Windsor, NJ

Women's Championship Match

April 19

Match #12

#2 Bryant 4, #1 LIU Brooklyn 0

Singles

1. BROWN, Ryan (BRY) def. LOUWERS, Sanne (LIU) 6-2, 6-1
2. DANS, Marine (LIU) vs. BOUILLIN, Marion (BRY) 6-3, 3-3, unfinished
3. SJOBERG, Linnea (BRY) def. KOENIGSFELDT, Caroli (LIU) 6-2, 6-1
4. WAGENER, Isabella (LIU) vs. LEONARD, Briana (BRY) 2-6, 0-5, unfinished
5. ZONNEVELD, Nancy (LIU) vs. CAMPFIELD, Ashanti (BRY) 5-7, 1-1, unfinished
6. BIRD, Rosie (BRY) def. HUSSAIN, Juweria (LIU) 6-1, 6-0

Doubles

1. LOUWERS/DANS (LIU) vs. BROWN/BOUILLIN (BRY) 6-5, unfinished
2. CAMPFIELD/BIRD (BRY) def. KOENIGSFELDT/ZONNEVELD (LIU) 8-2
3. LEONARD/SJOBERG (BRY) def. WAGENER/HISSAIN (LIU) 8-3

Men's Championship Match

April 19

Match #13

#1 Bryant 4, #2 Fairleigh Dickinson 3

Singles

1. BERZINS, Arvis (FDU) def. KUCHAR, Matt (BRY) 7-5, 6-4
2. WHALLEY, Jacob (FDU) def. MORRIS, Zachary (BRY) 6-4, 6-2
3. LORENZ, Luke (BRY) def. CHAN, Adam (FDU) 6-4, 6-3
4. WELSH, Oliver (BRY) def. QUINTANA, Gonzalo (FDU) 4-6, 6-4, 7-5
5. GARNEL, Diogo (FDU) def. VOGT, Max (BRY) 7-6 (11-9), 6-4
6. ORTIZ-GARCIA, Jorge (BRY) def. VALENTIN, Arnaud (FDU) 6-3, 6-4

Doubles

1. KUCHAR/KLIGER (BRY) vs. BERZINS/WHALLEY (FDU), 3-7 unfinished
2. ARGUELLO/MORRIS (BRY) def. QUINTANA/VALENTIN (FDU) 8-2
3. VOGT/LORENZ (BRY) def. CHAN/GARNEL (FDU) 8-1