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## **FDU's Arvis Berzins Caps Off Storied Career With Fourth Straight NEC Men's Tennis Player of the Year Honor**

**Somerset, NJ --** It would be difficult to script a career better than the one Fairleigh Dickinson's **Arvis Berzins (Adazi, Latvia/Riga Centre Language School)** has put together. The senior continued to rewrite the conference recordbook in 2014-15, capping off his remarkable tenure at Fairleigh Dickinson with a unanimous and unprecedented fourth consecutive NEC Men's Tennis Player of the Year honor. Bryant freshman phenom **Matt Kuhar (Smithfield, RI/Smithfield)** was tabbed NEC Rookie of the Year, while his head coach **Ron Gendron** earned his third consecutive NEC Coach of the Year honor after leading the Bulldogs to a second straight conference championship.

In the 34-year history of the Northeast Conference, there are few, if any, who can match the Berzins' credentials. No other tennis player had won more than two NEC Player of the Year awards until Berzins arrived with a splash at FDU back in 2011. While winning his four Player of the Year accolades, he was also tabbed NEC Rookie of the Year, earned All-NEC doubles honors all four years, won two NEC championships and claimed a spot on the Capital One Academic All-American third team as a junior. With that glittering resume, it is safe to say that Berzins will merit serious consideration for a spot in the NEC Hall of Fame down the line. This past season, Berzins collected two NEC Player of the Month honors and a pair of NEC Player of the Week accolades in helping lead the Knights to a second straight finals appearance. He wrapped his senior campaign with a 22-6 singles record, including an 11-3 mark at the #1 flight. Berzins led all NEC singles players in wins and win percentage (.786), and ended the year capturing 11 of his final 13 matches. In four years, he compiled a 71-29 singles record and finished 19-2 against NEC competitors. Berzins picked up notable victories this past season against Mississippi State's Juan Cruz Estevarena and Dartmouth's Chris Kipouras, both of whom have been ranked in the ITA top-100 this spring. The Adazi, Latvia native also earned first team All-NEC recognition at #1 doubles with teammate Jacob Whalley, his third straight first team honor. FDU has now sported the NEC Player of the Year nine times in the last 12 seasons.

Kuhar's impact was felt immediately at Bryant, as he filled the void at the #1 singles spot left by the graduation of All-NEC star Dana Parziale. Kuhar was tabbed NEC Rookie of the Month in September, and went on to win three NEC Rookie of the Week awards and two NEC Player of the Week honors this spring. A local product out of nearby Smithfield High School, Kuhar heads into the NCAA Tournament with an 18-9 overall mark, a considerable achievement considering Bryant's challenging slate of opponents. His 18 wins ranks third on the circuit, with nine of those victories coming in #1 flight play. Kuhar recently took a set off of NC State's Robbie Mudge - the #76-ranked player in the country - in an incomplete match just prior to the NEC Tournament. He also finished 3-1 against league rivals, including a win over NEC Player of the Year Arvis Berzins in late March. Kuhar is Bryant's third NEC Rookie of the Year, joining Parziale (2011) and current teammate Max Vogt (2013).

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Gendron has built an NEC powerhouse at Bryant, and his colleagues within the conference have taken notice, voting him NEC Coach of the Year three straight seasons. He is just the third coach in league history to win the award three consecutive years, and it comes after the Bulldogs defended their NEC title with a thrilling 4-3 win over Fairleigh Dickinson in another instant classic in West Windsor, NJ. Bryant finished with a 4-1 mark against conference rivals and will be battle-tested entering NCAA play after taking on four ranked opponents over the course of the 2014-15 season. The Bulldogs landed all six singles players and a pair of doubles tandems on All-NEC teams.

Bryant and FDU combined for all six spots on the All-NEC first team. Along with Berzins (#1), the Knights are represented by sophomore **Diogo Garnel (Lisbon, Portugal/Carcavelos Tennis) (#5)**. Bryant was recognized in four flights by senior **Zachary Morris (Garden City, NY/Garden City) (#2)**, freshman **Luke Lorenz (Colorado Springs, CO/Discovery Canyon Campus) (#3)**, sophomore **Oliver Welsh (San Diego, CA/Laurel Springs) (#4)** and freshman **Jorge Ortiz-Garcia (Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico) (#6)**.

A second team honoree last season, Morris will cap off a stellar senior campaign when he competes in the NCAA Tournament for the NEC champion Bulldogs next month. The Garden City, NY native leads Bryant and ranks second in the NEC with 20 victories against just nine setbacks. He finished the year 3-1 against NEC competition and posted eight wins at the #2 flight. Morris was named the September NEC Player of the Month and earned the first NEC Player of the Week award of the spring.

One of two freshman first team honorees for Bryant, Lorenz heads into NCAA competition with a 16-9 record. The #3 flight player won three of his four league matches, including a 6-4, 6-3 straight set victory in the NEC final against Fairleigh Dickinson. His biggest victory may have been his three-set triumph back in February against then a ranked Harvard team.

This marks the second straight first team All-NEC honor for Welsh, who ranks third on Bryant with 17 wins on the year. The San Diego product won a pair of #4 singles matches in the NEC Tournament, none bigger than his come-from-behind three-set win that clinched the Bulldogs' 4-3 win over Fairleigh Dickinson in the title match. Welsh finished the year 3-1 in NEC play.

Garnel is now a two-time first team award winner for the Knights. He won four of his five conference matches, including two in the NEC Tournament. Most notably, Garnel secured a 7-6, 6-4 win over Bryant in the NEC final. Garnel, who hails from Lisbon, Portugal, finished his year 6-4 in #5 flight play.

Only a freshman, Ortiz-Garcia came on strong in April for the Bulldogs. He posted a pair of NEC Tournament victories, highlighted by a 6-3, 6-4 win at #6 singles against FDU in the championship match. Ortiz-Garcia finished 2-0 versus conference opponents and has racked up 12 wins on the year.

The first team All-NEC doubles lineup features the Fairleigh Dickinson #1 singles combo of senior **Arvis Berzins (Adazi, Latvia/Riga Centre Language School)** and sophomore **Jacob Whalley (Wirral, England/Caldy Grange Grammar School)**. They are joined by a pair of Bryant tandems. Bulldog seniors **Ernesto Arguello (Managua, Nicaragua/American Nicaraguan School)** and **Zachary Morris (Garden City, NY/Garden City)** were honored at the #2 flight, while junior **Max Vogt (Fair Oaks, CA/Granite Bay)** and freshman **Luke Lorenz (Colorado Springs, CO/Discovery Canyon Campus)** were the pick at the #3 spot.

This marks the fourth All-NEC doubles honor for Berzins and third first team nod. He twice paired with Ibrahim Shams, then enjoyed a successful run with Gonzolo Quintana in 2014 before pairing with Whalley this spring. The duo won all three of their NEC matches and finished 3-1 on the season in #1 flight play.

Arguello can now boast of being the most decorated doubles player in NEC history. The only four-time All-NEC first teamer in league annals, Arguello's accomplishment is all the more remarkable considering he teamed with a different player in each of his four years. Pairing up with Morris - a three-time All-NEC doubles honoree himself - this spring, the tandem finished 7-1 at #2 doubles, including a pair of NEC Tournament wins and a victory against #36 North Carolina State. Arguello and Morris ended the year 4-1 against NEC rivals.

Vogt and Lorenz teamed up late in the year and came away with a pair of #3 flight victories at the NEC Championship. In beating teams from Wagner and FDU, the duo dropped just four games in the postseason. Just prior to the tournament, Vogt and Lorenz dropped an 8-7 decision to a team from #36 North Carolina State. This is Vogt's second All-NEC doubles accolade, having been voted to the second team with Zachary Morris last season.

Three schools were represented on the All-NEC singles second team, including a trio of players from Fairleigh Dickinson. Sophomore **Jacob Whalley (Wirral, England/Caldy Grange Grammar School)** was the pick at #2 singles, while classmates **Gonzalo Quintana (Guayaquil, Ecuador/Colegio Particular Pert)** and **Arnaud Valentin (Ridgefield, CT/Ridgefield)** were tabbed at the #4 and #6 spots, respectively. Bryant freshman **Matt Kuhar (Smithfield, RI/Smithfield)**, the NEC Rookie of the Year, earned second team accolades at the #1 flight and teammate **Max Vogt (Fair Oaks, CA/Granite Bay)** claimed #5 flight honors. Saint Francis U freshman **Alec Dylan Foo-Kune (Phoenix, Mauritius/International Connections Academy)** was the pick at the #3 position.

An All-NEC first teamer as a freshman, Whalley won 11 matches on the year for the Knights, including eight wins at the #2 flight. He tallied a 4-1 mark versus conference opposition and recorded straight set victories for FDU in his semifinal and championship matches at the NEC Tournament.

Foo-Kune appears to be one of the building blocks for Saint Francis U as evidenced by his strong spring season for the Red Flash. The freshman won his last four matches to close out the season and finished 6-2 overall competing at the #3 position. Foo-Kune, who was named NEC Rookie of the Week on April 7, also went 2-1 within the conference.

Quintana makes it back-to-back second team honors following a strong sophomore campaign for the Knights. He closed out the year with four wins in his last five matches, including a pair of NEC Tournament victories. Quintana won 11 matches in 2014-15 and was 4-1 in league play competing out of the #4 flight.

Vogt is now a three-time All-NEC singles award winner having earned second team honors as a freshman and first team plaudits in his sophomore campaign. Vogt enters the NCAA Tournament red hot, having won six of his last seven, including victories over FDU, Quinnipiac and UConn. The Fair Oaks, CA native has posted a 14-12 overall mark, and is 5-1 at the #5 spot and 3-1 versus NEC rivals.

Valentin sported the second-highest win percentage for FDU this season, finishing 10-5 on the year. He amassed a 6-1 record competing at #6 singles and won four of his five NEC matches. Two of those conference wins came in the NEC Tournament.

The second team All-NEC doubles lineup was highlighted by the Wagner freshman combination of **Michal Rolski (Kielczow, Poland/Oak Meadow (VT))** and **Juan Alanis (Mexico City, Mexico/K12 International Academy)**, who were recognized at the #1 flight. Saint Francis U seniors **Sergio Carvajal (Nueva Esparta, Venezuela/U.E. Fray Elias Maria Sendra)** and **Chris Jimenez (Bayside, NY/St. Francis Prep)** were the #2 pairing, while the Fairleigh Dickinson tandem of freshman **Adam Chan (Hillingdon, England/Langley Grammar School)** and sophomore **Diogo Garnel (Lisbon, Portugal/Carcavelos Tennis)** were honored at the #3 spot.

A lack of experience didn't stop Rolski and Alanis from compiling a 3-2 record in NEC competition this season for a rising Wagner program. The first-year performers won six matches this spring, four of which came in #1 flight play.

Carvajal and Jimenez closed out their careers on a high note with four straight victories to end the season. The two seniors combined to win both their NEC matches and finished 4-2 versus #2 flight competition.

Chan and Garnel teamed together at the NEC Tournament where they won a pair of #3 flight contests, including an 8-4 victory in the semifinals against Saint Francis U. The duo went 2-2 in NEC play.

The inaugural NEC All-Rookie team was headlined by Bryant freshman **Matt Kuhar (Smithfield, RI/Smithfield)**, the NEC Rookie of the Year and a second team All-NEC honoree at the #1 singles flight. Bryant's **Luke Lorenz (Colorado Springs, CO/Discovery Canyon Campus)** and Saint Francis U's **Alec Dylan Foo-Kune (Phoenix, Mauritius/International Connections Academy)** were also All-Rookie selections who earned All-NEC recognition. They are joined by three Wagner freshmen: **Michal Rolski (Kielczow, Poland/Oak Meadow (VT))**, **Ryan Khan (Weston, FL/University School)** and **Charlton Boyd (Shreveport, LA/Loyola College Prep)**.

Rolski made a huge impact in his freshman season for Wagner, winning two NEC Player of the Month awards in the fall. Manning the #1 singles spot for the Seahawks, he finished with an 18-9 record in 2014-15. Rolski tied for the league lead with 11 victories at the #1 flight against just five defeats. He is one of just three players who can boast of a win over Arvis Berzins in the FDU's player's storied career, beating him at the Quinnipiac Invitational in the fall.

Khan's terrific freshman season saw him post a 4-1 record in conference play and 13-10 overall mark. The Weston, FL native finished 7-4 at the #2 spot, the second-most wins at the flight in the league.

Boyd wasted little time making a name for himself with his selection as NEC Rookie of the Month in September. He would go on to post an 18-9 record on the year. The 18 victories tied for the team lead. Boyd concluded the season 4-2 against NEC opponents and 5-4 at the #5 flight.

### **About The Northeast Conference**

Now in its 34th 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](http://www.northeastconference.org)) and digital network ([www.necfrontrow.com](http://www.necfrontrow.com)), or follow the league on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Google+, all @NECsports.

## 2015 NEC Men's Tennis Award Winners

### NEC Player of the Year

Arvis Berzins	Fairleigh Dickinson	Sr	Adazi, Latvia/Riga Centre Language School
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### NEC Rookie of the Year

Matt Kuhar	Bryant	Fr	Smithfield, RI/Smithfield
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### NEC Coach of the Year

Ron Gendron	Bryant
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## 2015 NEC Men's Tennis First Team All-Conference

### Singles

Flight	Name	School	Yr	Hometown/High School
#1	Arvis Berzins	Fairleigh Dickinson	Sr	Adazi, Latvia/Riga Centre Language School
#2	Zachary Morris	Bryant	Sr	Garden City, NY/Garden City
#3	Luke Lorenz	Bryant	Fr	Colorado Springs, CO/Discovery Canyon Campus
#4	Oliver Welsh	Bryant	So	San Diego, CA/Laurel Springs
#5	Diogo Garnel	Fairleigh Dickinson	So	Lisbon, Portugal/Carcavelos Tennis
#6	Jorge Ortiz-Garcia	Bryant	Fr	Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico

### Doubles

#1	Arvis Berzins Jacob Whalley	Fairleigh Dickinson Fairleigh Dickinson	Sr So	Adazi, Latvia/Riga Centre Language School Wirral, England/Calday Grange Grammar School
#2	Ernesto Arguello Zachary Morris	Bryant Bryant	Sr Sr	Managua, Nicaragua/American Nicaraguan School Garden City, NY/Garden City
#3	Max Vogt Luke Lorenz	Bryant Bryant	Jr Fr	Fair Oaks, CA/Granite Bay Colorado Springs, CO/Discovery Canyon Campus

## 2015 NEC Men's Tennis Second Team All-Conference

### Singles

Flight	Name	School	Yr	Hometown/High School
#1	Matt Kuhar	Bryant	Fr	Smithfield, RI/Smithfield
#2	Jacob Whalley	Fairleigh Dickinson	So	Wirral, England/Calday Grange Grammar School
#3	Alec Dylan Foo-Kune	Saint Francis U	Fr	Phoenix, Mauritius/International Connections Academy
#4	Gonzalo Quintana	Fairleigh Dickinson	So	Guayaquil, Ecuador/Colegio Particular Pert
#5	Max Vogt	Bryant	Jr	Fair Oaks, CA/Granite Bay
#6	Arnaud Valentin	Fairleigh Dickinson	So	Ridgefield, CT/Ridgefield

### Doubles

#1	Michal Rolski Juan Alanis	Wagner Wagner	Fr Fr	Kielczow, Poland/Oak Meadow (VT) Mexico City, Mexico/K12 International Academy
#2	Sergio Carvajal Chris Jimenez	Saint Francis U Saint Francis U	Sr Sr	Nueva Esparta, Venezuela/U.E. Fray Elias Maria Sendra Bayside, NY/St. Francis Prep
#3	Adam Chan Diogo Garnel	Fairleigh Dickinson Fairleigh Dickinson	Fr So	Hillingdon, England/Langley Grammar School Lisbon, Portugal/Carcavelos Tennis

## 2015 NEC Men's Tennis All-Rookie Team

Flight	Name	School	Yr	Hometown/High School
#1	Matt Kuhar	Bryant	Fr	Smithfield, RI/Smithfield
#1	Michal Rolski	Wagner	Fr	Kielczow, Poland/Oak Meadow (VT)
#2	Ryan Khan	Wagner	Fr	Weston, FL/University School
#3	Luke Lorenz	Bryant	Fr	Colorado Springs, CO/Discovery Canyon Campus
#5	Charlton Boyd	Wagner	Fr	Shreveport, LA/Loyola College Prep
#5	Alec Dylan Foo-Kune	Saint Francis U	Fr	Phoenix, Mauritius/International Connections Academy