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Arcata's Casey Mansfield serves to North Coast Prep's Mack Madonick in the No. 1 singles finals at the Maki Indoor Club on Saturday. Tyson Ritter/The Eureka Reporter

Tigers take five of six singles championships

by Bryan DeMain, 4/15/2007

While a Humboldt-Del Norte Conference singles championships sweep was certainly on the minds of Arcata, Eureka's Kyle Carbis made other arrangements.

Carbis upset the odds and defeated Arcata's Ben Miller 6-2, 6-3 in the No. 4 finals to hand the Tigers their only loss all season at the Maki Indoor Tennis Club on Saturday.

"Ben definitely didn't play his game at all," Maki said. "But give credit to the Eureka kid, he got a lot of balls back and was the better player today."

The Tigers did, however, finish the day with five, one of which came from an unlikely competitor.

Arcata freshman Brendon Winnacott was asked to fulfill a seemingly impossible task before Saturday — move up from No. 9 on the team's ladder to No. 3.

"The kid is amazing," Maki said. "I've coached for 15 years, and I've never seen someone pick up this sport so naturally and so fast."

Filling in for the regular No. 3 Charlie Hankin, who was absent for personal reasons, Winnacott surprised the field and defeated Fortuna's No. 3 Josh Sarvinski 6-4, 6-3 in the finals.

"I'm so pumped for him," Maki said. "Just to make the finals is quite an accomplishment."

If there was any doubt that Casey Mansfield or Alex Kusmak of Arcata were going to lose a match in the No. 1 and No. 2 brackets, respectively, it was put to rest immediately.

Mansfield, like he's done all season, simply overpowered the competition.

Although North Coast Prep's No. 1 Mack Madonick impressively cleared himself a path to meet Mansfield in the No. 1 finals, the Arcata junior walked away the No. 1 singles champ after claiming a 6-1, 6-0 win.

"I put a lot of hard work and practice into this," Mansfield said after the win.

The only other guy that can keep Mansfield honest is Kusmak, his senior teammate.

"We're about even," Mansfield said. "He's pretty much my only competition up here. He beat me just the other day."

Kusmak, who is clearly a No. 1 on any other H-DNC team, took down McKinleyville's Derrick Carbiener 6-4, 6-1 in the No. 2 semifinals before rolling Del Norte's David Standing 6-1, 6-0 in the finals.

Five of Arcata's top six seeds were heavily favored headed into the tournament, as the team went undefeated and won 126 individual matches during conference play.

Arcata wraps up the season 143-1, a number that still has Maki in awe.

"I'm obviously still so proud in my guys," he said. "I mean, a sweep would be nice, but we still had an unbelievable season."

Arcata's No. 5 Edward Hunter beat Fortuna's Garrett Farnsworth 6-3, 7-5 in the finals, while teammate Erik Martini took down Fortuna's Dillon Poe 6-2, 6-4 in the No. 6 finals.

The Humboldt-Del Norte doubles championships will be held on Friday at the Maki Indoor Tennis Club beginning at 10 a.m.