

A cool slice: Tigers' Winnacott claims top-seed crown at H-DN tennis championships

Ray Aspuria/The Times-Standard

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FERNDALE -- Brendan Winnacott turned to his left and pointed.

"Gabe Trepanier," he said. "I played him before, he's a good player. He's probably my biggest threat right now."

Perhaps that's no longer the case.

Winnacott, Arcata High's top-seeded singles tennis player, defeated Trepanier (North Coast Prep) 6-3, 6-4 to claim the No. 1 crown at the Humboldt-Del Norte Championships on Saturday.

The victory not only gives Winnacott -- who jumped up to No. 1 due to the absence of Seth McFarland -- local bragging rights, it also affords him the automatic qualifier for sections.

"I've never played No. 1's down there," Winnacott said. "It would be cool to play down there. There's a lot better competition and it will improve my game."

Winnacott identified Trepanier as one of the better players in the county and hinted they would probably meet in the finals as the No. 1 singles bracket played out.

Trepanier also hinted about a potential meeting, although, he was looking forward to taking on

another Tiger.

"I really wanted to play Seth, Arcata's No. 1," he said. "He's my friend and we've played for years. I wanted to go to the finals with him."

But Trepanier didn't discount Winnacott's abilities.

"He's a good opponent," Trepanier said. "I consider him the other best person in the league."

While the gray skies and brisk temperature may have slowed players as the competition kicked off just after 10 a.m., each athlete quickly caught fire on their way to titles.

Even the rain -- which forced the No. 1 through No. 4 singles players to transplant from Ferndale to Fortuna -- couldn't slow the march towards glory.

Ferndale's Eli Gurnee and Trevor Nesvold captured the No. 2 and No. 3 singles titles.

Gurnee defeated McKinleyville's Matt Scott 6-2, 6-1 while Nesvold topped Arcata's Earl Dippre 6-4, 6-2.

Arcata rebounded in the No. 4 bracket as Blair Winnacott beat North Coast Prep's Sylvan Arevalo 7-5, 6-4.

The No. 5 title match saw Eureka's Max Roecklin top Arcata's Michael Fuilliard 4-6, 6-4, 7-5. The loss coupled with Dippre's defeat represented the Tigers only blemishes on a perfect season in H-DN play.

Nathan Hill, another Logger, closed out the singles championship with a win over Del Norte's Kong Her.

Up next for H-DN tennis is the doubles championships. The event is scheduled for May 24 but a site and time have yet to be determined.