

Two Men's Tennis Players Make All-American Status



Two of Ohio State's best tennis players won multiple matches in the NCAA Tournament this week, earning them All-American status as they advanced to the round of 16.

Freshman Alexander Bernard, ranked 41st in the country, made an unexpected run all the way to the NCAA quarterfinals while senior James Trotter, ranked 34th, got to the above-mentioned round of 16. Five total OSU tennis players participated in the 64-man tournament.

Bernard's jaunt through the field at NAAs began with a win over Texas A&M's No. 53 Raphael Perot, a three-set battle that saw Bernard fall behind a set to start but respond with a 6-3 victory in set two and 7-5 thriller of a win in set three.

A win over No. 56 Sanir Banerjee of Stanford secured Bernard's All-American status, but he wasn't done. In his third consecutive three-set victory of the tournament, Bernard knocked off Hawaii's No. 65 Andre Ilagan to reach the quarterfinals against No. 9 Chris Rodesch, part of the Virginia team that downed Ohio State in the NCAA Championship on the team side.

Bernard fell behind by a break in set one against Rodesch and couldn't recover, losing 6-3 to fall behind 1-0 in the best-of-three-set match. The same fate befell him in the second set, a 6-4 loss that ended his tournament run.

Trotter received a tough draw in the first round against the 18th-best player in the country, Kentucky's Alafia Ayeni, and the two engaged in a war to advance. Their first set went to tiebreak as Ayeni edged out a 7-6 (7-5) win, then Trotter took the second set 6-2 to force a decisive third. Another air-tight win in 7-5 fashion pushed Trotter through to the next round.

His spot as an All-American came much easier. Trotter downed South Carolina's No. 16 Connor Thomson in straight sets 7-5, 6-1 to make the round of 16. No. 20 Andrew Fenty of Michigan defeated him there, however, 6-2, 7-6 (7-3).

Ohio State senior Cannon Kingsley, ranked 11th in the country, came within one win of All-American

status himself after picking up a first-round win over Arizona's No. 55 Colton Smith. He lost a three-set bout in the round of 32 to end his run early, though, with No. 42 Murphy Cassone (Arizona State) knocking him off 6-1, 6-7 (7-3), 7-6 (7-2) in a match with two sets that went to tiebreak.

Justin Boulais and J.J. Tracy also made the tournament for the Buckeyes, making first-round exits.