



Filling out the 2010 NCAA tournament bracket: before

by Sam Wolf

“How’s you’re bracket?” “Its all messed up.” These are two of the most overused lines in the month of March and a slight amount of April. The construction of the bracket seems to be an American tradition just as much as apple pie and fire works on the Fourth of July. However, the apple will always taste good and the fireworks will not upset the entire crowd by not deciding to go off. This is exactly what the bracket does, leaving a sour taste in one’s mouth and leaving everyone watching in shock and dismay.

At times, everyone wishes they could be like ESPN analysts, Huber and Digger. It would make people’s predictions seem

a little bit more credible and who would not want to be able to wave a pen around just like Digger? Well here it is, the closest thing to Parkland’s Jay Billas. A look inside of the mind of the Parkland High School’s sports editor for filling out this year’s tournament bracket.

Since, there are too many games occurring in the first round, and if you take a look down you can see that boys tennis and boys volleyball seem to be slowly creeping up, I will begin with the sweet sixteen. In the midwest region, teams advancing to the sweet sixteen are: Northern Iowa, Maryland, Georgetown and Tennessee. That is right, Northern Iowa will upset Kansas in the second round. It is a bold statement, but every

sweet sixteen needs a team full of players who grew up on a farm and their local playground was not the street corner, it was in their backyard.

Next on the bracket is the west region. Moving on to the sweet sixteen from this region will be Syracuse, Butler, Pittsburgh and Kansas Sate. There are not very many upsets in this region; however, Butler was a team that was under the radar this season. They are definitely the least athletic team advancing to the sweet sixteen in this region, but they play as a team and intelligently.

Moving on to the East region, Kentucky, Wisconsin, West Virginia and Marquette will be moving on to their respective regional semi-finals. Marquette will be a dangerous team in the tournament. They have played in a large amount of games this season that have gone down to the wire, which is exactly how the majority of matchups play out in the postseason. Their experience will be key.

Lastly, we have the South region. Advancing to the third round will be St. Mary’s, Notre Dame, Duke and Purdue. As much as I want to put Villanova in the sweet sixteen, I just can not do it. They have a solid team and a solid coaching

staff, but they did not finish the season strong enough to have the momentum needed to advance. I have always said, “Show me a national champion, and I’ll show you a team that finished the season strong.”

After fast forwarding a little bit and skipping a couple of weeks, we find ourselves in the final four. In the final four we will find Georgetown, Syracuse, West Virginia and Duke. I am aware that these are all big name programs, but it is too tough to predict upset teams making it all the way to the final four that my fellow bracketologists would be better off predicting quality teams making it to the final four. After Syracuse pummels Georgetown and Duke gets past a close game against West Virginia, it will be the Blue Devils and the Orangemen in the championship game.

Though Syracuse’s zone has been hyped up all year, Duke has outstanding shooters in Nolan Smith, Jon Scheyer, Kyle Singler and even Andre Dawkins. I see Duke winning this game 67-62 and becoming the national champions for the fourth time in their history.

If Duke wins this national championship, the last three of their championships will have been nine years apart.

Boys tennis team embarks on their hopeful 2010 season

by Mark Walsh

The boys tennis team kicks off the 2010 year with a new coach. Coach Julien Taibi will start his first regular season as a head coach. Long time Parkland coach Art Smith retired last year after many years of coaching and even coming out of retirement once before. Parkland, under Coach Smith, has been to districts the last four years running. Coach Taibi hopes to keep that streak alive which he says in regards, “The parkland team has an incredible reputation. I was nervous coming into this job, but I got comfortable fast. I have high hopes on continuing on a victory streak.”

Julien Taibi graduated from East Stroudsburg University, where he played singles and doubles. He graduated with a degree in English, and is currently teaching his first year at Parkland. He has worked and taught tennis at clubs such as West End, Brookside, and Saucon Valley. His familiarity with these clubs betters him in preparation for the regular season, because he has an inside view of many of the surrounding schools coaches and

players. “Because of these clubs and the players I’ve coached, I could say I have an advantage of seeing the other schools and coaches first hand.” Coach Taibi already knew over twenty five percent of the team coming into the head coaching position and felt comfortable with the rest of the team almost immediately.

This season the tennis team will be focusing highly on internal competitiveness. He hopes to keep the players in check with conditioning exercises, and keeping his players in great shape. Coach Taibi said tryouts and rank placement are to initially place players, giving them every opportunity to move up the ladder to better spots. He hopes to give the players incentive to strive for their best and help push one another.

This season faces some tough matches, one of which Taibi is excited for is a match against Saucon Valley at home. Saucon Valley has a few highlighted players that Coach Taibi has experience teaching. Overall, he looks forward to building a relationship with his new players, and hopes to find a long time home within Parkland High tennis.

Boys volleyball prepares for another successful season

by Andy Shaw

The 2010 boys volleyball is ready to rumble again for another great season – already winning the Black Knight Invitational at Hempfield High School and winning their first game against Liberty High School.

This year’s team is lead by a senior duo of seniors Jon Wittaker and Andy Buss. After a disappointing loss during last year’s seasons states, the team hopes to repeat their impeccable regular season, 22-3... and win the State Championships.

The players are committed to their state championship goal. Junior Shaan Negandhi, a center for the varsity team, said, “It does not matter what position I play, or if I ever even get to play. All we want is to get to States. Our team works great together, and we have the necessary skills needed to dominate.”

The boys have also been preparing and prepping for this season all year. “We all play club volleyball – some of us together, some of us against each other. We also all prep and condition at camps and open gyms – volleyball for many of us, has become

our second life.” Said Negandhi.

This year’s varsity team has fourteen total players – two sophomores (Josh Suppan and Reno Kriz), six juniors (Anthony Khoury, Shaan Negandhi, Justin Lewis, Joe Gulliano, Vinnie Hudson, and Josh Herring), and six seniors (Jon Wittaker, Andy Buss, Chad Pezoldt, Ben Karabasz, Chris Zumberge, and Greg Warmkessel). This year’s team is reportedly the largest number wise team in Parkland History.

As Wittaker puts it, the team has an equal balance between new skill and experience, juniors and seniors. “Our team has some excellent new talent that is not only going to help us this year, but will also help the team in next year’s season. Moreover, we have excellent court experience from the rest of the seniors on our team – most of us have been playing since middle school.” Said Wittaker. Seniors Andy Buss and Chris Zumberge also went as far achieving spots on the All Tournament team during their recent win at the Black Knight Invitational.

As a team that has not suffered a 0-3 loss during their regular season since 2008, Parkland is already prepping for another championship worthy volleyball season. They are already at an excellent start, not dropping a single game. Yet as Negandhi puts it, “All we care about is the pleasure of the game and how we play together, the record may matter, but not as much as the team does.”



photo courtesy of Kaitlin Melendez

Boys tennis team poses after a successful practice.