

BULLDOG

UPDATE

The Decatur High School (DHS) Varsity boys tennis team has had a successful season. With a 13:2 win-to-loss ratio headed into the state tournament, the team was in good shape both on and off the courts. Senior Dylan Cooper, co-captain of the boys varsity team and member since freshman year, is very proud of the team's performance this season.

Since the team earned a victory against The Marist School, who DHS had not beaten in over four years, team morale has been at an all time high.

"It's been great. We all know each other very well cause we've all been on the team for a good amount of time [...] we get along well," Cooper said.

Due to their long training hours, the team has become especially close this year. The varsity team has official practices Monday and Wednesday, both two hours long. Additionally, they run drills every Tuesday and Thursday.

Leadership has not changed since the 2022 season. Last year, as there were no seniors on the team, then juniors Cooper and Luke Atkinson stepped into the roles of co-captains that they have retained this year as well.

While the team didn't lose any players, freshman and starter Juan Parrilla was a welcome addition to the team. "...We have Juan who's a new freshman. He's been very good. He's been leading us in one doubles very well," Cooper said.

However, with the end of the school year approaching, the seniors are preparing for graduation.

"I mean, we're all really close and it's gonna be sad when it's over, but we're just trying to enjoy it while it lasts. Next year will be next year," Cooper said.

Though Cooper is sad to leave, he is confident in the abilities of the younger players and hopes they continue to improve with future teammates.

The team went into the state playoffs full of excitement, regardless of the outcome.

"Well, the hope is that we win it all.

We have a lot of confidence and momentum going into it, and we're enjoying the home field advantage for our first two matches, and we all have high hopes for this tournament," Cooper said.

Though they lost, the team finished their season after a tough match against Greater Atlanta Christian School at their home courts. They ended the season placing within the top 8 of the state, making it the farthest the team has gotten in ten years.

- Jack Marrah

Despite a slow start to the season, the Decatur High School (DHS) varsity girls soccer team started to turn things around during region play and finished second, solidifying their spot in the playoffs. "We have a really good group of girls, but came into the start of our season with a really hard schedule," explained left forward

Cat Johns, "These [region] games really challenged us, especially since it took time for all the girls to gel after playing with their different club teams in the fall."

The bulldogs finished 4-1 in region play after starting the year 0-5 in some tough non-region games. "Once we had all started to learn each others styles of play, it was really

fun to see us reach some of our best levels of soccer together," Johns elaborated.

The girls played host to Harris County High School for the first round of the GHSA 5AAAAA state playoffs and the Decatur defense fought hard all night, holding Harris County to no goals. With six minutes left in the game, and the score tied 0-0, freshman Mckenzie Godfrey scored not only one but two goals, securing a playoff victory and a ticket to the "Sweet Sixteen".

After playing most of the year on JV and scoring multiple goals, Godfrey was pulled up for the varsity team's last five regular season games and the playoffs. The rising star was a key contributor to the bulldogs' success in the last stretch of the season. Unfortunately, Decatur fell to Greenbrier High School (Evans) in the second round of the playoffs. While the season did not end the way the girls wanted it to, the improvements made by Coach Douglas Altizer and the girls over the course of the season led to many exciting games.

- Paul Gaeta

