

The Spartans traveled to Monte Vista today for a match up against one of the best teams in the league. The Spartans have almost played as many matches as they have had practices. Since Monte Vista has 8 Courts all of the matches but #3 doubles started right at 330 on another cool February afternoon.

Super Senior Danny Nomura was on Court #1 against Josh Hertz. Danny owns Josh and beat him last year twice. Danny took very little time in coasting to a 6-0, 6-1 victory. Unlike his match against Clovis West, this match took only 40 minutes or so.

The Spartans are starting out the season without one of their better players, Luke Happel. Luke and his DLS Soccer teammates are in the NCS Finals and finish up the season on Saturday. They boys will welcome him back next week.

Over on Court 5 Freshman Andreas 'Big' Vlahos was playing against a very cagey left-hander. Andreas was trying everything in his arsenal but it wasn't enough. Andreas ended up losing 6-1, 6-1.

On Court 6 Sophomore Kyle Haley had his hands full. He was hitting his big forehand but every shot seemed to be covered by his opponent. He served well but his opponent had too many answers. Kyle went down 6-3, 6-1.

Over on Court 2 Super Sophomore Jeff Kubota was playing the tall, hard hitting Nikail Takar. Nikhal played #2 last year also for Monte Vista and split his matches with the Spartans. Jeff played steady tennis forcing Takar into numerous errors. Jeff's court coverage is unbelievable causing Takar to over hit and missing shots trying to hit big forehands. Jeff ended up winning 6-2, 6-3.

Now the match was tied 2-2.

After our first doubles sweep the day before the Spartans started the same lineup in Doubles. At #1 doubles Will Wright and Rick Trapp were involved in a tough match with lots of long rallies. Will and Rick like to attack and don't hesitate to come to net. They played a long match and ended up on the short side of a very close match 3-6, 4-6.

At #2 doubles, the Spartans had the previously undefeated team of Juniors Ryan Sheffield and Ravine Wijesuriya. Ravine was crushing his backhand and Ryan was killing his forehand. Many long rallies and service breaks but too many breaks for the Monte Vista duo. They ended up losing 4-6, 4-6.

Now the match is not looking too good for the Spartans. MONTE VISTA 4, DE LA SALLE 2. Monte Vista only has to win one match and the Spartans have to win all three.

Now the 3 matches on the Court are #3 singles with Matt Trinkus, #3 doubles with Chris Behring and Nicolai Baillot, and Griffin Ivanov at #4 singles.

The first match off was Griff's. He won the first set in fairly short order 6-3. He was involved in a long second set with long rallies. Griff is playing steadier tennis with every match. He's improved his first serve and makes very few forced errors. He's hitting his forehand more inside out to his opponent's backhand. As a result of his improved play Griff was able to prevail 6-3, 7-5.

Now on the back courts with the sun having set and the lights turned on there were only two matches left. Senior Co-Captain Matt Trinkus was in his third set and our #3 doubles team was in their second set.

Both teams were gathered around watching both matches which were only one court apart. I was on the Court in between the matches and my head was on swivel mode trying to watch both matches simultaneously.

Matt Trinkus was getting to lots of balls and hitting big deep looping forehands and backhands. Matt lost the first set 2-6 and was down 0-3 in the second set. Matt had come back from being down 0-3 in the second set and won the second set winning the last 6 games in a row to win the second set 6-3. Unbelievable. He also was hitting some great deep slices when his opponent hit him short low balls. Matt is able to play a variety of back court shots, great lobs, and serving and returning consistently. Matt was able to come back and win the third set 6-4. Chest bumps from all his teammates.

For the second time in 3 matches we're all gathered around watching the determining match at #3 doubles. The match is tied 4-4 and whoever wins, wins the match. Nicolai and Chris had prevailed in the first set 6-3. They lost the second set 6-1 and were down a break in the third. There was no giving up in those boys. They fought back from a break down in the third. Just a few volleys here and there and the match would have been theirs. Nicolai and Chris were attacking and coming to the net on their opponent's second serve. They fought off two match points at 5-6 and tied the match at 6-6. The Monte Vista team played an unbelievable tie breaker and for the second time in 3 matches the Spartans came out on the short end in the third set tiebreaker.

The Spartans travel over to St. Ignatius this afternoon to scrimmage the defending Nor Cal champs.

**GO SPARTANS!!**