

Men's Tennis: Ohio State Falls To Kentucky In NCAA Semifinals



Ohio State men's tennis fell two wins short of its goal of winning an NCAA Championship, suffering a 4-1 semifinals loss to Kentucky on Saturday in Champaign, Illi.

The No. 4-seeded Buckeyes started the match with a doubles-point victory from the rackets of Cannon Kingsley and JJ Tracy (6-1) and Matej Vocel and Robert Cash (6-3). However, the No. 8-seeded Wildcats responded with all four singles points to advance to the NCAA title match.

Ohio State and Kentucky split the first set in all six matches, but the latter pulled away in the second set and left the Buckeyes with no answer. Kentucky's Gabriel Diallo defeated Vocel, 6-3, 6-2, while Millen Hurrion beat Tracy, 6-1, 6-2, and Francois Musitelli topped Jake Van Emburgh, 6-4, 7-6, in a hard-fought battle.

Kingsley faced Kentucky's Liam Draxl in the deciding match. The players went back-and-forth on the court, trading blows and adding to their respective point totals. However, Draxl pushed in front in the final frame and took home a three-set victory for his team and gave the Wildcats their spot in the championship.

Ohio State's loss in the semifinals was its fourth since 2009. The Buckeyes have made it to the semifinals six times in the last 14 seasons, winning twice and losing four times. Despite the late playoff advances, the program has yet to claim its first national championship on the outdoor courts.

Head coach Ty Tucker and his team finish the season 28-4 with losses to Texas Christian (ITA Indoor Nationals), Michigan and Kentucky.

Next week, several Buckeyes will compete for individual titles in the NCAA singles and doubles tournaments. Kingsley, Tracy, James Trotter and Vocel will compete in the singles tournament, while Vocel and Cash, and Trotter and Justin Boulais will participate in the doubles bracket.