

Ohio State Tennis Hoping To Make Run At Indoor Title



There's no question Ohio State enters the ITA Indoor Championships this weekend as the prohibitive favorite to take home the title.

Ranked No. 1 in the country, the Buckeyes cruised through to the Sweet 16 of the event by sweeping UCF and Oregon, respectively, during the kickoff weekend Jan. 28 and 29. In regular season match play they've posted wins over No. 23 Texas A&M, No. 6 Texas, No. 5 Virginia and No. 10 Baylor to boast a 12-0 record thus far in the season. OSU is the No. 1 overall seed for the Indoor Championships.

Taking home the third indoor championship in program history would be a great objective to achieve for the Scarlet and Gray en route to the NCAAs later this year.

"Every match is tough. It's the top 16 teams," Ohio State associate head coach Justin Kronauge told BSB. "We've had a good run but that doesn't do anything for you this weekend."

Four nationally-ranked singles players will highlight Ohio State's lineup for the matches. Junior JJ Tracy is the highest-rated of the bunch at No. 9, with redshirt senior James Trotter No. 28, freshman Alexander Bernard No. 41, and senior Robert Cash No. 75.

Seniors Justin Boulais and Cannon Kingsley fill out the remaining starting lineup, though Kingsley has been out several weeks with an ankle injury. He expects to return for the tournament, however.

The first-seeded Buckeyes take on 16th-seeded Illinois, a team they beat 6-1 earlier this year, Friday at 7:30 p.m. Should they win, they'll play the winner of eighth-seeded Wake Forest and ninth-seeded Texas Saturday. The semifinals and finals of the championships take place Sunday and Monday, respectively.

"We want to win a national championship," Kingsley said. "We want to win indoors, Big Ten, pretty much everything is our goal. I think we've proven that (we're capable) so far this year, beating two tough teams on the road and being pretty dominant at home."