

# NOTRE DAME **TENNIS TRADITION**



*Jerry Evert (left) – whose niece Chris went on to win 18 professional grand-slam titles and be the world’s #1 women’s player – and Charles Samson (right) teamed up to reach the semifinals of the NCAA doubles tournament, helping the Irish earn a share of the 1944 national championship. Samson, the NCAA singles runner-up that year, returned to his alma mater as head coach in the mid-1950s, recruiting a number of players who would win the second Irish national title, in 1959.*



## Tradition of Excellence Defines Irish Men's Tennis Program

*Notre Dame's 84-year-old program boasts two national championships and over 1,000 victories*

One needs only to glance at a few numbers to realize the tradition of excellence boasted by the Notre Dame men's tennis program. In 84 years of varsity competition, the Irish have posted 68 winning seasons, including 28 in the past 29 years. In 2004-05, Notre Dame became the seventh Division I school to pile up 1,000 all-time victories. A pair of national championships and countless tournament and conference titles serve as mileposts along the road to success.

Men's tennis initially took hold as an organized sport in 1888, when university vice president Rev. John Zahm, C.S.C., and future Notre Dame president Rev. Andrew Morrissey, C.S.C., announced the formation of a faculty-sponsored lawn tennis club. Within three years, a full-fledged interhall tennis program had emerged. In 1910, the Notre Dame Tennis Club was founded, setting up the transition to varsity status for the sport.

On May 7, 1923, the first Notre Dame varsity men's tennis team (the school's sixth varsity squad) played host to Indiana University, dropping a 6-0 decision at home in Notre Dame Fieldhouse. After coach C.P. Van Ryper elected to lead the Irish for only that 1923 season (consisting of two matches), Notre Dame began a 10-year coachless period. Nonetheless, the Irish managed their first victory in 1924, a 2-0 win at Wabash College, and put together an outstanding crew in 1927, posting a perfect 6-0 record for the first of six undefeated Irish men's tennis campaigns. Athletic director and football coach Knute Rockne was a major supporter of the program throughout this period, taking steps to allow the sport to be successful right up until his death.

Pedro de Landero became Notre Dame's second coach in 1934, helming the Irish program for six years before surrendering the reins to Walter Langford, who took Notre Dame to new heights.

After going undefeated in 1942, success arrived in a major way in '44 when Langford's team was 9-0 during the regular season and went on to win a share of the national title, making men's tennis the first Irish sport (along with men's golf, which won the '44 national title that same week) besides football to claim a national championship. Charles Samson led the Irish charge by advancing to the final of the singles draw of the NCAA Championships before falling to Miami's Francisco "Pancho" Segura – who also captured the crown in 1943 and '45 – which denied the Irish sole possession of the title (Miami and Texas also finished as co-champions). Samson and Jerry Evert, who reached the semifinals in doubles, earned All-America honors for their efforts, becoming the first Irish players to do so.

Evert and his brother Jim (a '47 All-American whose daughter Chris went on to be the No. 1 women's player in the world en route to claiming 18 grand-slam singles titles) combined for an astounding rate of success at Notre Dame. Together, they posted a 100-0 record in dual-match play (26-0 in both singles and doubles for Jerry, 24-0 in both singles and doubles for Jim).

After delivering another undefeated season in 1947, Langford ceased leading Notre Dame in 1953, to be replaced by Samson. The former Irish star led the team for three years before Tom Fallon began his



*Notre Dame's first varsity tennis team was fielded with six players in 1923 under coach C.P. Van Ryper.*

tenure in 1957. Two seasons later, he led the Irish to a 14-0 regular season and a share of the 1959 NCAA title with Tulane. Notre Dame's Maxwell Brown and Bill Heinbecker had a chance to clinch the outright title when they faced the Green Wave's Crawford Henry and Ronald Holmberg in the NCAA doubles final, but the Tulane pair prevailed to give its team a share of the championship.

In his career, Fallon coached a number of players who went on to great success after leaving Notre Dame, from Jasjit Singh, who excelled in the professional grand slams, to 1966 graduate Pedro Rosselló, who went on to become the governor of Puerto Rico. Rosselló was named one of two winners of the 1999 Rolex Achievement Awards, which pay tribute to past participants in the world of collegiate tennis

who have achieved excellence in their chosen careers and are honored for their professional successes and their contributions to society.

Following another undefeated campaign in 1966, Fallon brought the 1971 NCAA Championships to the Notre Dame campus, as UCLA won the team title. The NCAA singles final featured two soon-to-be legends: Jimmy Connors of UCLA and Roscoe Tanner of Stanford, with Connors – just a freshman at the time – prevailing.

Fallon became a college tennis legend and amassed a 514-194 record, winning the Eastern Intercollegiate Championships 11 times before retiring after the 1986-87 season. He was inducted into the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's (ITA) Hall of Fame in 1988.

In the fall of 1987, Bob Bayliss took over leadership of the program, beginning the process of returning Notre Dame to a position of national prominence. Bayliss led Notre Dame to its first-ever ITA national ranking in his third year and to an NCAA tournament berth in 1991 – the first for the Irish since the team format was adopted in 1977.

Notre Dame solidified its position as a national power in 1992 when Bayliss' squad upset #7 Mississippi State, host #3 Georgia, and #1 USC to advance to the NCAA championship match before falling to second-ranked Stanford. The Irish were the lowest-seeded team to advance to the NCAA final

### All-Time Men's Tennis Victories Division I Schools

|    |                   |              |
|----|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. | North Carolina    | 1,398        |
| 2. | Texas             | 1,352        |
| 3. | Georgia           | 1,131        |
| 4. | USC               | 1,097        |
| 5. | Stanford          | 1,067        |
| 6. | UCLA              | 1,065        |
| 7. | <b>Notre Dame</b> | <b>1,032</b> |
| 8. | Michigan          | 1,020        |
| 9. | Yale              | 922          |

### Midwest Excellence Under Bob Bayliss

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Regional Team Rank</u> | <u>Top Singles Player (Regional Ranking)</u> | <u>Top Doubles Pairing (Regional Ranking)</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1990        | 2nd                       | David DiLucia (#2)                           | David DiLucia-Mike Wallace (#2)               |
| 1991        | 1st                       | David DiLucia (#1)                           | David DiLucia-Chuck Coleman (#1)              |
| 1992        | 1st                       | David DiLucia (#1)                           | David DiLucia-Chuck Coleman (#1)              |
| 1993        | 1st                       | Will Forsyth (#1)                            | Will Forsyth-Chuck Coleman (#1)               |
| 1994        | 1st                       | Andy Zurcher (#1)                            | Andy Zurcher-Todd Wilson (#1)                 |
| 1995        | 1st                       | Mike Sprouse (#1)                            | Mike Sprouse-Jason Pun (#1)                   |
| 1996        | 3rd                       | Mike Sprouse (#2)                            | Mike Sprouse-Jason Pun (#3)                   |
| 1997        | 2nd                       | Ryan Sachire (#1)                            | Brian Patterson-Jakub Pietrowski (#1)         |
| 1998        | 2nd                       | Ryan Sachire (#1)                            | Brian Patterson-Jakub Pietrowski (#1)         |
| 1999        | 2nd                       | Ryan Sachire (#1)                            | Brian Patterson-Ryan Sachire (#3)             |
| 2000        | 5th                       | Ryan Sachire (#1)                            | Javier Taborga-Aaron Talarico (#3)            |
| 2001        | 2nd                       | Casey Smith (#5)                             | Javier Taborga-Aaron Talarico (#3)            |
| 2002        | 2nd                       | Javier Taborga (#3)                          | Casey Smith-Javier Taborga (#2)               |
| 2003        | 5th                       | Luis Haddock (#10)                           | Brent D'Amico-Matthew Scott (#11)             |
| 2004        | 3rd                       | Luis Haddock (#6)                            | Luis Haddock-Matthew Scott (#8)               |
| 2005        | 4th                       | Barry King (#12)                             | Brent D'Amico-Ryan Keckley (#15)              |
| 2006        | 3rd                       | Sheeva Parbhu (#2)                           | Ryan Keckley-Eric Langenkamp (#7)             |

## Former Players Talk of the Notre Dame Experience

"I went to Notre Dame with very high expectations. I wanted to graduate with honors, be an All-American and play professional tennis upon my graduation. Thanks to the commitment and effort of all my coaches, professors and staff, I reached all my goals and continue to benefit from everything I learned during those fabulous four years."

**- Javier Taborga, class of 2002**

"I visited many of the top universities in the world in my search for a perfect school, and each one had something special to offer. Notre Dame was the only one that offered the complete package. I wanted a school that could help me develop as an athlete, a student, and a person. I expected quite a bit from the school, but as I look back on my four years I can honestly say that it went above and beyond anything I ever could have imagined. My only regret is that I did not have four more years."

**- Casey Smith, class of 2002**

"Not only is Notre Dame a prestigious university to attend, but to be a student-athlete there commands respect. I can't tell you the overwhelming pride I feel when I tell people I played Division I college tennis ... at Notre Dame."

**- Brian Patterson, class of 1999**

"I remember thinking what a privilege it was just to receive a letter from the tennis coach at the University of Notre Dame – and I wasn't even Catholic, nor was I a big Notre Dame fan. I just knew that Notre Dame was a place where I could combine my academic goals with my athletic goals. Little did I realize Notre Dame is that and so much more. ... As I traveled the United States and the world playing professional tennis, I was constantly amazed at the number of alumni who would introduce themselves out of the blue and welcome me to their particular corner of the world. I was offered housing and meals from Charleston, South Carolina, to Perth, Australia. The reason? Because I was part of the Notre Dame family; that was enough for them. ... It will be difficult to look at this place in the rearview mirror, but I know that I'll never really say good-bye to Notre Dame. I will always carry a piece of Notre Dame in my heart."

**- Andy Zurcher,  
class of 1994 and  
former Irish assistant coach**

and the first Northern school to accomplish the feat. Bayliss was named the national coach of the year by the ITA, and Notre Dame finished the season ranked third in the nation, which remains the highest-ever listing for the school.

The '92 team was led by senior David DiLucia, who capped an extraordinary career at Notre Dame as a five-time All-American. He remains the only Irish player ever to be ranked No. 1 in the nation in singles, while he and Chuck Coleman are the only Notre Dame doubles pair ever to top the national doubles rankings. In 1992, DiLucia, playing No. 1 singles, went undefeated in dual-match play until falling to Alex O'Brien of Stanford in the NCAA final to finish the season 21-1 at No. 1. The Irish legend was honored by the ITA with the Dan Magill Award, which goes to the top senior collegiate tennis player in the country. DiLucia went on to a successful pro career, eventually playing in the singles main draw of each of the professional grand slam events, entering the world's top 100 in doubles and clinching the 2001 World Team Tennis championship for the Philadelphia Freedoms. He served as the personal coach of Lindsay Davenport, when she was the world's #1-ranked women's player.

Despite losing DiLucia, the '93 squad flourished, advancing to the NCAA quarterfinals (before losing to eventual national champion USC) and ending the season ranked 10th in the nation. Besides their success in the NCAAs, the Irish also won the prestigious Blue-Gray National Tennis Classic with victories over four nationally-ranked teams. Coleman garnered All-America accolades in singles and doubles and earned the *Tennis Magazine*/Arthur Ashe National Award for Sportsmanship and Leadership.

In 1994, the NCAA introduced regional play in the men's tennis tournament for the first time, and the Irish posted wins over Michigan and Minnesota to win the Region IV tournament and a spot in the

NCAA round of 16, which returned to the Notre Dame campus as Bayliss coordinated a city-wide effort to make the event a success on all fronts. Mark Merklein of Florida won the singles championship, while USC was the team victor (the Irish dropped a heartbreaking 4-3 decision against #4 Georgia).

Seniors Andy Zurcher and Todd Wilson, who both began their careers at Notre Dame as walk-ons, advanced to the semifinals of the NCAA Doubles Championship to earn All-America honors. Zurcher became the second Notre Dame player to win the Dan Magill Award and also the first men's tennis competitor to gain CoSIDA Academic All-America honors.

In 1995, Mike Sprouse won the national Arthur Ashe Award for Leadership and Sportsmanship. In addition, Bayliss was named the winner of the Rolex Meritorious Service Award for his dedication to college tennis.

The following year marked the first for Notre Dame in the BIG EAST Conference. The Irish won the 1996 title over Miami and have advanced to the final of the BIG EAST tournament each year since then, winning five championships.

In 2000, another Irish tennis great, Ryan Sachire, graduated after a brilliant career that saw him become the first Notre Dame player to win national senior-player-of-the-year honors when he swept both national senior awards. The ITA honored Sachire as the Ted A. Farnsworth/ITA National Senior Player of the Year and as the recipient of the John Van Nostrand Memorial Award, which gives a stipend to a college senior who intends to pursue a professional career. Sachire, who went on to capture 18 titles on the pro tour before retiring to become an assistant coach at Baylor, was ranked as high as No. 2 in the nation, was a three-time All-American in singles and twice was tabbed the BIG EAST Championship's Most Outstanding Player.

The two years following Sachire's departure featured a resurgence in Notre Dame's program, which has become one of the elite in the country once again. In 2001, Notre Dame won its second Blue-Gray National Tennis Classic title and moved into the top 10 of the ITA national rankings for the first time since 1993.

The 2002 season saw a number of milestones. The Irish advanced to the round of 16 of the NCAA tournament for the first time since 1994, won their third BIG EAST title and were ranked as high as fourth in the nation – the second-highest listing in school history. Javier Taborga became the second Notre Dame player to earn All-America honors in both singles and doubles in the same season. The Irish senior also was honored by the ITA as the National Senior Player of the Year and was the only competitor in the nation to defeat both the year-end No. 1 singles player and No. 1 doubles team.

Classmate Casey Smith teamed with Taborga to put together one of the best doubles seasons in school history, shattering the school record for doubles wins in a campaign (32) and earning All-America honors along the way. Assistant coach Billy Pate, now the head coach at Alabama, also was honored as the National Assistant Coach of the Year, continuing a long line of Irish coaching awards. Bayliss, who would be tabbed his conference's top coach for the ninth time during his Notre Dame career in 2005, also was named the BIG EAST's coach of the year.

## The Bayliss Factor

Four years at Notre Dame under head coach Bob Bayliss has greatly enhanced the development of many players. A few examples of the progression of careers are below:

### **Andy Zurcher ('94)**

#### **As a freshman**

Walk-on, No. 5 singles and No. 3 doubles

#### **As a senior**

All-American; NCAA Doubles semifinalist; ranked #19 in singles and #7 in doubles; 19-12 at No. 1 singles

### **Todd Wilson ('94)**

#### **As a freshman**

Walk-on, 1-0 in singles and 3-1 in doubles in dual matches

#### **As a senior**

All-American; NCAA Doubles semifinalist; ranked #7 in doubles; 18-9 at No. 4 singles

### **Casey Smith ('02)**

#### **As a freshman**

12-14 at No. 4 & 5 singles; 10-8 at No. 2 & 3 doubles

#### **As a senior**

All-American; ranked #4 nationally in doubles; 10-6 at No. 2 singles

### **Javier Taborga ('02)**

#### **As a freshman**

4-0 at No. 6 singles; 6-7 at No. 2 & 3 doubles

#### **As a senior**

National Senior Player of the Year; Singles & Doubles All-American; 19-5 at No. 1 singles; ranked #11 in singles and #4 in doubles

**1944 NCAA Champions**

Notre Dame's 1944 team headed to Northwestern for the 60th NCAA Championships in search of its first national intercollegiate title after being proclaimed the mythical "Western Tennis Champions" with a perfect 9-0 record. Each team was allowed to enter four players and the total score of a team was determined by the number of wins of those individuals from the quarterfinals on.

The "Big Four" of Jerry Evert, Jim Griffin, Charles Samson and Bill Tully, who had combined to lose just one time in the regular season, came through for head coach Walt Langford. A singles runner-up finish and a doubles semifinal showing were enough to earn the Irish a share of the title with Miami (Fla.) and Texas.

After all four won first-round singles matches, only Samson survived the second round. Unseeded, he advanced to the title match after ousting Gonzaga's third-seeded Harry Likas 6-4, 6-4, 7-5 in the semifinals. Samson's dream of an NCAA singles crown ended against Miami's top-seeded Pancho Segura, whose two-handed backhand and attacking style helped him cruise through the draw without losing a set, gaining the second of his three consecutive NCAA singles titles.

In the doubles competition, Griffin and Tully dropped their opening-round match to the second-seeded team. Evert and Samson rallied the Irish with a semifinal showing, keyed by a quarterfinal upset of Pacific's Arnold Beisser and George Druliner, to guarantee Notre Dame a share of the national title and make men's tennis (along with men's golf, which also won the 1944 NCAA title) the first Irish sport other than football to capture a national championship.



*Notre Dame's 1944 NCAA champions, led by head coach Walter Langford. Members of the team included captain Charles Samson, Jerry Evert, Jim Griffin, Darrell Black, Sanford Warshawsky, Bill Tully, Joe Wood, Bart O'Brian, and Leonard Buchstaber.*

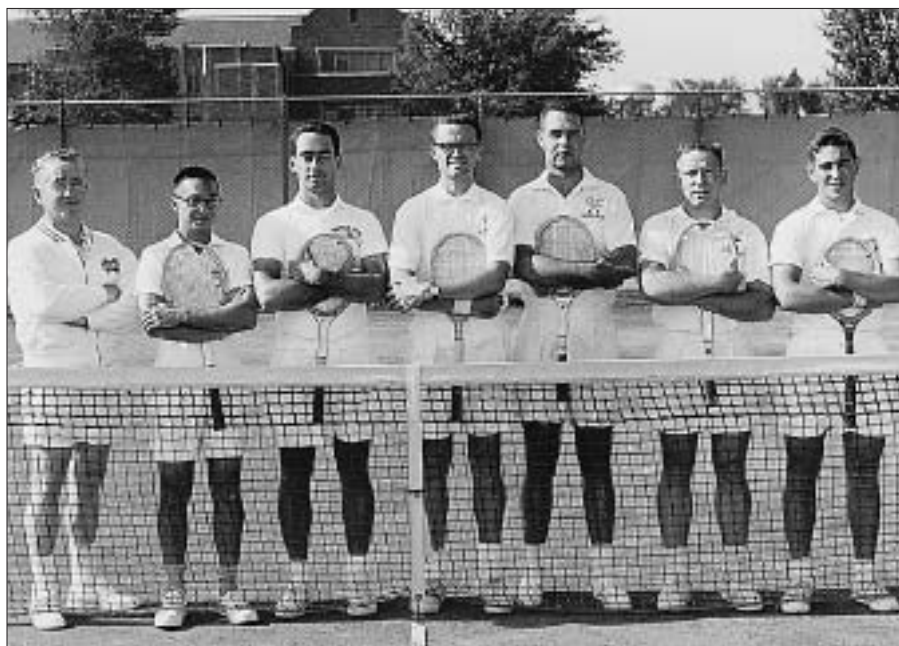
The Irish found success once again at Northwestern, site of the 1959 NCAA Championships. Despite a change making all singles and doubles victories count in the team score, Notre Dame shared the national title – this time with Tulane – when both teams finished with eight points.

Irish captain and No. 1 singles player Max Brown advanced to the singles semifinals before losing to San Jose State's Whitney Reed, who went on to win the singles title.

Two matches between the eventual co-champions proved to be keys in the outcome: a singles quarterfinal and the doubles championship. Brown posted a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Tulane's Ron Holmberg in singles, but Holmberg teamed with Crawford Henry to form the top-seeded team in the doubles draw. Brown and Bill Heinbecker needed a win over the Green Wave in the doubles title match to clinch the outright NCAA crown for the Irish. Henry and Holmberg rallied Tulane with a 6-3, 6-3, 6-2 victory to secure the doubles championship and a share of the NCAA title, the first time it had been shared since 1944.

The 1959 Notre Dame men's tennis team proved to be one of the strongest teams in Irish history, as it won all 14 of its dual matches. Ten of the Irish victories were by 9-0 scores, three others were 8-1, and the only close match was a 5-4 win over Michigan, the Big Ten champion. The unbeaten season was the fifth of Notre Dame's six perfect seasons and the first of two under legendary coach Tom Fallon.

**1959 NCAA Champions**



*Notre Dame's 1959 NCAA champions: (from left) head coach Tom Fallon, co-captain Ron Schoenberg, co-captain Max Brown, Don Ralph, Charles Stephens, Ray Bender, and Bill Heinbecker.*

1992 NCAA Runners-Up

Notre Dame wrote another chapter in its NCAA tennis history of success, as the Irish and top-ranked All-American David DiLucia stormed to the NCAA championship match in 1992. The 10th-seeded Irish were the lowest seed and first Northern team to reach the national title match since the current format was adopted in 1977.

After finishing the regular season with a 20-3 record, Notre Dame split the six singles matches with seventh-seeded Mississippi in its first-round contest. The Irish won in straight sets at No. 2 and 3 doubles to advance to the quarterfinals for the first time.

Notre Dame next faced host and third-seeded Georgia and built a 4-2 lead after singles. The Bulldogs rallied to knot the match at 4-4 after doubles wins at No. 1 and 3, but the Irish doubles team of Will Forsyth and Andy Zurcher clinched another upset with a 7-6 (7-5), 7-6 (7-5) win at No. 2.

Top-ranked and defending champion USC awaited Notre Dame in the semifinals with a 21-2 record. The Irish won two of the first three matches to take the lead and then won three different three-set matches to pull the 5-1 upset before doubles commenced.

Second-seeded Stanford stopped Notre Dame's Cinderella run in the title match with a 5-0 win. The Cardinal won two three-set matches to help clinch the championship.



Notre Dame's 1992 NCAA finalists: (kneeling from left) Allan Lopez, Todd Wilson, Chuck Coleman, Horst Dziura, Kareem Zakharia and Antonio Payumo. (standing from left) assistant coach Brian Kalbas, Chris Wojtalik, Tad Eckert, Will Forsyth, Tom North, Ron Rosas, Andy Zurcher, Mark Schmidt, David DiLucia and head coach Bob Bayliss.

Other Undefeated Teams

1927



Notre Dame's undefeated (6-0) 1927 team: captain George Stadel, Hank Burns, John Cianci, Bud Kane, Bud Markey, Ed Murphy, Carl Tavare, and manager Ted Griffin.

1942



Notre Dame's undefeated (9-0) 1942 team: head coach Walter Langford, captain Dan Canale, Olen Parks, Jim Ford, Joe Schaefer, Fred Doutel, Nick Pappas, Bob Faught, George Biittner, Art Hoffman, Lyle Joyce, manager Ed Burns and manager George Thompson.

1947



Notre Dame's undefeated (8-0) 1947 team: (kneeling, from left) Jerry Evert, Joe Brown, captain Jim Evert, Ed Caparo. (standing, from left) head coach Walter Langford, Bill Tully, Bob David, Charles Samson, and manager Jack Caemerer. Not pictured: Jim Griffin, Dick Hartman, Phil Lyons and Jim Rodgers.

1966



Notre Dame's undefeated (15-0) 1966 team: (kneeling, from left) Frank Honerkamp, Tom Murphy and Bill Brown. (standing, from left) manager Jim Mong, Ken Capps, captain Pedro Rosselló, head coach Tom Fallon, Jasjit Sing, and Vincent Chinn. Not pictured: Gary Reiser.



Luis Haddock



Javier Taborga



Allan Lopez

## Irish in the Davis Cup

Since the arrival of head coach Bob Bayliss, various players have represented their native lands in the Davis Cup – the world-wide team tennis competition that has been contested for over a century. Over the past 15 years, three Notre Dame players – Allan Lopez ('94) of El Salvador, Javier Taborga ('02) of Bolivia, and Luis Haddock ('04) of Puerto Rico – have competed in Davis Cup action, while David DiLucia ('92) was a member of the prestigious United States team, though he never saw action in a tie. Current senior Irakli Akhvediani was invited to play for his native Georgia in 2004, but he declined because of academic conflicts.

Taborga has established himself as the most prolific Davis Cup player in Bolivian history. In five years of competition (1998-99, 2002-04), he holds a 21-15 (11-7 singles, 10-8 doubles) record. His victory total is the most for any Bolivian in the Davis Cup, while his 23 career ties played also are tops for his country. Taborga and Alberto Sottocorno stand as the best

Bolivian doubles team, as they are unbeaten in five Davis Cup matches.

During his final season at Notre Dame, Taborga played in the Davis Cup and went unbeaten in both singles (4-0) and doubles (3-0) in helping Bolivia to a 4-0 record that moved it up to Group III of the Americas Zone. In his most recent performance, Taborga was 2-3 in singles and 2-2 in doubles in '04, as Bolivia won two of five ties in Group III action in Honduras. In '98, Taborga notched a 6-3, 6-2 win against Haddock in Davis Cup doubles action in Bolivia.

Haddock holds the distinction of being the youngest player in Puerto Rico history to play in the Davis Cup, as he made his debut at the age of 16 in 1998. He has participated in all but one Davis Cup (2001) since then, and his six career appearances tie him with Gabriel Montilla as the most by any Puerto Rican. Haddock's 13-12 career record (10-9 singles, 3-3 doubles) place him behind only Montilla in career

wins in the event. His Davis Cup career was highlighted by helping Puerto Rico post 10 consecutive wins from 1998-2000 en route to moving up to Group III. He then went 3-1 in singles play in 2003, as Puerto Rico was unbeaten in four matches to move up to Group II of the Americas Zone. In 2004, Haddock lost to former University of Florida standout Mark Merklein (who won the NCAA singles title at the Courtney Tennis Center in 1994) of the Bahamas in the Group II quarterfinals in February. He then went on to avenge a 2000 Davis Cup loss to Jamaica's Ryan Russell in relegation play in April.

During his final two collegiate seasons, Lopez became the first Bayliss-era player to compete in the Davis Cup. He compiled a 6-8 record (0-3 singles, 6-5 doubles) in Americas Zone Group III action, helping El Salvador to a 5-2 record in 1993 and a 3-1 mark in '94.

## This is Irish Tennis

