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1987 Men's Tennis Immediate Release

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For immediate release:

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- The winningest team at Cedarville College over the past two decades has been the men's tennis team and much of the credit goes to the head coach. In his 21-year stint at the helm, Murray Murdoch has posted an .874 winning percentage with a 347-50 record. Among his teams' accomplishments are 18 Mid-Ohio Conference titles, 17 NAIA District 22 championships, and 19 appearances at the NAIA National Tournament in Kansas City.

But last spring's Yellow Jacket netters had an un-Cedarville-like record of 11-6 and failed to win the district crown for the first time in 15 years. Murdoch has since enjoyed the greatest recruiting year he has ever had, and he admits that his teams of the near future may be headed toward even greater heights.

Murdoch's team begins a fall schedule this weekend and at this time the top seven players on the squad are all freshman. He signed all seven to letters of intent over the summer and he points out that it is definitely within the realm of possibility that this year's six varsity players could consist of all rookies for the entire 1986-87 season. The Jackets are scheduled to play at Anderson College on Friday, and against Indiana-Purdue Fort Wayne and Grace College on Saturday.

"We could have the best team we've ever had with these players as freshmen," said Murdoch. "These newcomers are tournament-toughened players."

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Murdoch goes on to say that he did not go out on a recruiting binge to make up for last year's "down" season. "With the talent we had, last spring's squad did a great job. Remember, we won the MOC title for the 15th straight time. But I had been in contact with some of these recruits for some time. Others have interesting stories about how they found out about Cedarville. Everything seemed to work out."

Jeff Kohl is currently the team's number one player. He was rated number two in doubles in the state of Wisconsin and ninth in singles. The Manitowoc native is also 46th in the 17-18 year old division of the USTA's Western rankings which includes Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and parts of West Virginia. Kohl played in the Wisconsin state tournament in each of the last two years.

At number two is Dino Tsibouris of Gahanna, Ohio. He was part of last spring's Class A-AA state championship doubles pair as a representative of Worthington Christian High School. Tsibouris is ranked 15th among 17-18 year olds in the Ohio Valley.

Playing number three is Bruce Taranger of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the first Canadian tennis player ever recruited by Murdoch. Taranger did not play high school tennis, but opted to play for the All-Canadian Tennis Academy in London, Ontario. He has qualified for the Canadian National Tournament the past two years and has been ranked in the Top 10 in the 17-18 year old division.

Taranger has done quite well in the Prairie Tri-Provincial Tournament finishing as the singles runner-up this year and as the doubles champion in '85 which are his most notable performances. The lefthander was the Saskatchewan singles and doubles champion two years ago in the 15-16 year old class.

Steve Lesko of Perkasio, Penn. is the highest-ranked American player that Murdoch has ever recruited and he's currently at number four. He has been ranked as high as 14th in the Middle States by the USTA. Lesko reached the finals in two Middle States tournaments in July.

In the number five position is Steve Brumbaugh of West Milton, Ohio. He was the number one player last year at West Milton High School. Steve and his brother lost to Tsibouris' doubles team in the quarterfinals of the state tournament.

Scott Poling of Marmora, N.J. and John Kelley of Yreka, Cal are presently in positions six and seven. Poling has spent the last two years at the Nick Bolleteri Tennis Academy in Bradenton, Fla. Kelley, who played in the north section of the California individual championships his senior year in high school, is a transfer from the College of the Siskiyous in Weed, Cal. He will be a freshman athletically because that school did not have a tennis program.

Murdoch has not forgotten about any returnees from this past season's team. After all, number one player Thurman Payton returns for his senior year after earning a spot on the All-NAIA District 22 team in the spring. But the Bay Village, Ohio native is already down at the number eight position. Others who have considerable varsity experience are Greg Frank and Russ McNamara. They are currently ninth and tenth respectively.

The Yellow Jackets will basically have a full year of tennis for 1986-87. The fall schedule will mainly feature opponents in Indiana since its NAIA district plays most of its matches in the fall anyway. Cedarville will also compete in the Rolex Regional Small College Tennis Championships at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville on Oct. 10-12.

Murdoch will be lining up some indoor matches for the winter months. A busy spring schedule is still in the works with several NCAA Division I opponents included.