

# WICHITA STATE TENNIS 2021-22 NEWSLETTER

## WOMEN'S TENNIS 2022 PREVIEW

### PREVIEW

The Shockers will play seven of their 21 regular season matches against schools that finished among the top-75 in last spring's ITA Division I team rankings. WSU hosts a total of 10 times, beginning Saturday, Jan. 22 with an afternoon/evening double-header against Saint Louis (2 p.m.) and Newman (6 p.m.) at Wichita Country Club. The American Athletic Conference does not play a regular season schedule, but seven of the other nine women's tennis-playing programs (along with one future member) will pass through Wichita at some point this spring. Florida Atlantic, which earlier this fall accepted an invitation to join The American, comes to town for a Feb. 11 matchup at Genesis West Central. It will be the first-ever meeting between the programs. The February home slate also includes visits from Tulane (Feb. 13), Tulsa (Feb. 16) and Memphis (Feb. 25). The Shockers move outdoors in March and April and welcome Cincinnati (Mar. 17), South Florida (Mar. 18), Houston (Apr. 1) and SMU (Apr. 3) to the Sheldon Coleman Tennis Complex. WSU will again play a challenging road schedule, starting with a three-day swing that begins in Des Moines, Iowa against defending Missouri Valley Conference champion Drake (Jan. 29) and continues with matches at Omaha (Jan.30) and South Dakota (Jan. 31). The Shockers spend two days in Lincoln, Neb. for matches against Creighton (Feb. 5) and Nebraska (Feb. 6) and travel to Fayetteville, Ark. on Feb. 19 for a double-dip against 2021 NCAA tournament qualifier Arkansas and Oral Roberts. The March calendar brings a Texas road swing against Abilene Christian (Mar. 6) and UT Arlington (Mar. 7) and a trip north to face in-state rival Kansas State (Mar. 27). The regular season concludes Apr. 10 at Kansas City. The American Athletic Conference Championship takes place just down the road in Tulsa, Okla. (Apr. 20-23).

### FALL HIGHLIGHTS

The team dominated the competition at the ITA/UTR Fall Circuit event in Topeka, Kansas, as well as at the Shocker Invitational. Natsumi Kurahashi and Vitalia Stamat produced strong results at the top of the lineup at the Tulsa Invitational, defeating opponents from Central Arkansas and Houston. The team also swept six singles matches against AAC foe Houston.



# MEN'S TENNIS 2022 PREVIEW

## PREVIEW

The Shockers finished last season ranked No. 37 in the nation after their first trip to the NCAA Tournament since 2016. The men went undefeated at home and took down No. 32 Memphis in the AAC Tournament to advance to the semifinals. The Shockers return seven players from last year's team and will be led by upperclassmen Nico Acevedo, Orel Ovil and Stefan Latinovic. The 2022 schedule features matches against 10 teams that finished last season ranked in the national rankings. The Shocks will play 10 home matches, highlighted by a faceoff with the 2021 American Athletic Conference (AAC) Championship runner-up South Florida team that finished No. 29 in the nation. WSU will host Saint Louis and Oral Roberts on Jan. 22 and Purdue on Jan. 23 to open their spring campaign. The Shockers will then head to Fort Worth for the ITA Kick-Off Weekend, where they will play No. 46 Tulsa on Jan. 29, followed by either No. 5 TCU or No. 75 Portland. The team returns home for a match against Creighton on Feb. 11 before hitting the road for four matches, including former Missouri Valley Conference rival Drake. The Shockers are back home March 3 for a dual against Omaha prior to another road stretch, highlighted by a matchup with No. 24 Texas Tech. WSU will head to Tempe, Ariz. for a three-day tournament at ASU starting March 11 before returning home for a doubleheader against Cowley and Northwest Missouri State on March 26. The Shockers play three-straight conference matches in Dallas, Texas April 1 against Memphis (No. 35), April 2 against SMU (No. 45) and April 3 against Temple. Wichita State wraps up regular season play at home against USF (April 8), Tulsa (April 14) and Middle Tennessee State (April 16).

## FALL HIGHLIGHTS

Luka Mrsic had a strong fall season, going undefeated at the Oklahoma State and Mississippi State hidden duals and beating players from Michigan, Tulane, Tulsa, Alabama, Nebraska and Oklahoma State. The Shockers had multiple quarterfinals appearances at the ITA Regionals in Lincoln, Neb. with Nico Acevedo in singles and Alex Richards and Ray Lo in doubles.



# WOMEN'S TENNIS SCHEDULE

## HOME EVENTS

# 2022 SCHEDULE

W I C H I T A S T A T E W O M E N ' S T E N N I S



**JAN 22**  
2:00PM



**JAN 22**  
6:00PM



**FEB 11**  
8:00AM



**FEB 13**  
10:00AM



**FEB 16**  
1:00PM



**FEB 25**  
6:00PM



**MAR 17**  
12:00PM



**MAR 18**  
12:00PM



**APR 1**  
1:00PM



**APR 3**  
10:00AM



## FULL SCHEDULE

<b>JAN 22 (SAT)</b>	<b>2 PM</b>	<b>VS. SAINT LOUIS</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (WICHITA COUNTRY CLUB)</b>
<b>JAN 22 (SAT)</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>VS. NEWMAN</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (WICHITA COUNTRY CLUB)</b>
<b>JAN 29 (SAT)</b>	<b>11 AM</b>	<b>@ DRAKE</b>	<b>DES MOINES, IA</b>
<b>JAN 30 (SUN)</b>	<b>9:30 AM</b>	<b>@ OMAHA</b>	<b>OMAHA, NE</b>
<b>JAN 31 (MON)</b>	<b>10 AM</b>	<b>@ SOUTH DAKOTA</b>	<b>SIOUX FALLS, SD</b>
<b>FEB 5 (SAT)</b>	<b>2 PM</b>	<b>VS. CREIGHTON</b>	<b>LINCOLN, NE</b>
<b>FEB 6 (SUN)</b>	<b>11 AM</b>	<b>@ NEBRASKA</b>	<b>LINCOLN, NE</b>
<b>FEB 11 (FRI)</b>	<b>8 AM</b>	<b>VS. FLORIDA ATLANTIC</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (GENESIS WEST)</b>
<b>FEB 13 (SUN)</b>	<b>10 AM</b>	<b>VS. TULANE</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (WICHITA COUNTRY CLUB)</b>
<b>FEB 16 (WED)</b>	<b>1 PM</b>	<b>VS. TULSA</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (WICHITA COUNTRY CLUB)</b>
<b>FEB 19 (SAT)</b>	<b>9 AM</b>	<b>@ ARKANSAS</b>	<b>FAYETTEVILLE, AR</b>
<b>FEB 19 (SAT)</b>	<b>1 PM</b>	<b>VS. ORAL ROBERTS</b>	<b>FAYETTEVILLE, AR</b>
<b>FEB 25 (FRI)</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>VS. MEMPHIS</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (WICHITA COUNTRY CLUB)</b>
<b>MAR 6 (SUN)</b>		<b>@ ABILENE CHRISTIAN</b>	<b>ABILENE, TX</b>
<b>MAR 7 (MON)</b>		<b>@ UT ARLINGTON</b>	<b>ARLINGTON, TX</b>
<b>MAR 17 (THU)</b>	<b>12 PM</b>	<b>VS. CINCINNATI</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)</b>
<b>MAR 18 (FRI)</b>	<b>12 PM</b>	<b>VS. SOUTH FLORIDA</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)</b>
<b>MAR 27 (SUN)</b>		<b>@ KANSAS STATE</b>	<b>MANHATTAN, KS</b>
<b>APR 1 (FRI)</b>	<b>1 PM</b>	<b>VS. HOUSTON</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)</b>
<b>APR 3 (SUN)</b>	<b>10 AM</b>	<b>VS. SMU</b>	<b>WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)</b>
<b>APR 10 (SUN)</b>		<b>@ KANSAS CITY</b>	<b>KANSAS CITY, MO</b>
<b>APR 20 (WED) -</b>		<b>AAC CHAMPIONSHIPS</b>	<b>TULSA, OK</b>
<b>APR 23 (SAT)</b>			

# MEN'S TENNIS SCHEDULE

## HOME EVENTS

# 2022 SCHEDULE

W I C H I T A S T A T E M E N ' S T E N N I S



JAN 22



JAN 22



JAN 23



FEB 11



MAR 3



MAR 26



MAR 26



APR 8



APR 14



APR 16



## FULL SCHEDULE

JAN 22 (SAT)	12:30 PM	VS. SAINT LOUIS	WICHITA, KS (GENESIS HEALTH CLUB)
JAN 22 (SAT)	4 PM	VS. ORAL ROBERTS	WICHITA, KS (GENESIS HEALTH CLUB)
JAN 23 (SUN)	1 PM	VS. PURDUE	WICHITA, KS (GENESIS HEALTH CLUB)
JAN 29 (SAT)		VS. TULSA	FORT WORTH, TX
JAN 30 (SUN)		VS. TCU OR PORTLAND	FORT WORTH, TX
FEB 4 (FRI)	6 PM	@ OKLAHOMA	NORMAN, OK
FEB 11 (FRI)	1 PM	VS. CREIGHTON	WICHITA, KS (GENESIS HEALTH CLUB)
FEB 13 (SUN)		@ NEBRASKA	LINCOLN, NE
FEB 17 (THU)	2 PM	@ DENVER	DENVER, CO
FEB 26 (SAT)	11 AM	VS. WESTERN MICHIGAN	DES MOINES, IA
FEB 27 (SUN)	11 AM	@ DRAKE	DES MOINES, IA
MAR 3 (THU)	1 PM	VS. OMAHA	WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)
MAR 5 (SAT)	11 AM	@ TEXAS TECH	LUBBOCK, TX
MAR 6 (SUN)		@ UT ARLINGTON	ARLINGTON, TX
MAR 11 (FRI) - MAR 13 (SUN)		ASU TOURNAMENT	TEMPE, AZ
MAR 26 (SAT)	10 AM	VS. COWLEY	WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)
MAR 26 (SAT)	4 PM	VS. NORTHWEST MISSOURI ST.	WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)
APR 1 (FRI)		VS. MEMPHIS	DALLAS, TX
APR 2 (SAT)		@ SMU	DALLAS, TX
APR 3 (SUN)		VS. TEMPLE	DALLAS, TX
APR 8 (FRI)		VS. South Florida	WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)
APR 14 (THU)	1 PM	VS. TULSA	WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)
APR 16 (SAT)	1 PM	VS. MIDDLE TENNESSEE ST.	WICHITA, KS (COLEMAN TENNIS COMPLEX)
APR 21 (THU) - APR 24 (SUN)		AAC CHAMPIONSHIPS	TULSA, OK

## SCHEDULE HIGHLIGHTS

- > Arizona State three-day tournament consisting of eight teams, including four teams who finished last season ranked in the top 40 in the nation
- > Road matchup at Oklahoma Feb. 4
- > Texas road trip to Texas Tech and UT Arlington March 5-6
- > Three-straight home matches to wrap up the regular season against USF, Tulsa and Middle Tennessee St.

## SHOCKER NEWCOMERS

### HARRIET HAMILTON >> GRADUATE STUDENT – TURIN, ITALY



Hamilton is a graduate transfer from Jacksonville State who brings experience and maturity to the Shocker lineup. She was a two-time All-Ohio Valley Conference selection while at JSU. Hamilton has two seasons of eligibility remaining and will use that time to pursue a masters degree in Management Science. She posted an 8-2 singles record during the Fall season with one of the two losses coming in a tiebreaker and played six Fall doubles matches with five different partners and put together a 3-3 record.

#### Why did you choose Wichita State?

“WSU women’s tennis stood out to me as a well-established athletic program with great resources as well as excellent and experienced coaches to guide players towards ultimate success. Also, the newly-built weight room and top class tennis facility with its own club house really gave me a sense of the program’s dedication to its players. WSU’s intense conference season with consistent opportunities to play against ranked teams gave me a strong belief and commitment to the program.”

### FRESHMAN – CHISINAU, MOLDOVA << VITALIA STAMAT

Stamat is a Moldovan standout who brings a wealth of international experience and success. She battled injuries but made her singles debut in the Fall finale -- the Hurricane Invite -- and won both of her singles matches in straight-sets. Stamat partnered with LingWei Kong to win two doubles matches and reach the Round of 16 at the ITA Central Region Championships. She finished the fall season 3-2 overall in doubles play.



#### Why did you choose Wichita State?

“I chose Wichita State because of Colin. It was so scary to come to study in university in the U.S., but Colin gave me confidence in that. He and Kewa are such nice coaches and I feel so comfortable and confident with them.”

### CLARA WHITAKER >> FRESHMAN – WICHITA, KS



Whitaker is one of the most-decorated prep tennis players in Kansas history and looks to continue her success at the collegiate level. She is a member of WSU’s Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). She finished with a 6-3 singles record during the Fall tournament season and won her first three collegiate matches at the Shocker Classic. Whitaker dropped her first qualifying match at the ITA Central Region Championships but bounced back to win a pair of consolation matches. She put together a 6-2 doubles record while splitting time between partners Natsumi Kurahashi and Jessie Zheng. She reached the Round of 32 at the ITA Central Regional.

#### Why did you choose Wichita State?

“I chose Wichita State because of the sense of a second family within the team. I always heard how good of a work ethic the girls had and how hard they worked. I wanted to surround myself with people like that. I also think I can really grow in many aspects at Wichita State, from my tennis game to academics to how I am as a person in general. I am so excited for this journey at Wichita State and blessed to have this opportunity.”

### GRADUATE STUDENT – WICHITA, KS << DOHEE LEE

“We’re excited to have Dohee return to Wichita, where she grew up and was a phenomenal junior and high school player,” head coach Colin Foster said. “She was having an outstanding career as an undergraduate, but COVID and injuries interrupted her final two years at Pacific. We’re excited for her to be healthy and continue her college career back in Wichita.”

As a sophomore at Pacific, Lee went 7-5 in singles, including a perfect 6-0 record at No. 2. She also earned West Coast Conference All-Academic Honorable Mention honors.

#### Why did you choose Wichita State?

“There are many reasons to why I chose Wichita State for tennis, but the main reason was because of Colin and Kewa. I’ve always been close to them and they have been supportive all throughout my tennis career. I knew I could fully spread my potential and grow here. I’m beyond grateful to be given a chance to play with this team and be able to improve. I’m happy to be back home and spend my last years at Wichita State.”



## SHOCKER NEWCOMERS

### JACKIE LIN >> FRESHMAN – TAIPEI, TAIWAN



Lin joined the Wichita State men's tennis team in the fall of 2021 and went 6-6 in singles in his first fall season with the Shockers.

Prior to coming to Wichita State, Lin ranked as high as 123 in the ITF Junior Rankings in January 2021. He also won the singles event at J4 in Kaohsiung in October of 2019, winning every match in straight sets. Lin reached the singles finals at the J5 in Changua in June 2019 and the J5 in Saipan in May 2019. He won six ITF Junior titles in doubles, including the J4 Causeway Bay in January of 2020.

"We're excited to add Jackie to our team," head coach Danny Bryan said after signing Lin last March. "He is a talented player who has had international success in both singles and doubles. We look forward to helping him continue to develop his game around his big serve and forehand."

#### Why did you choose Wichita State?

"I was looking at many schools before I came here, and Wichita State had a very good tennis program last year. My parents and I wanted for me to go to a good tennis program, so this is very good for me here."

### THIRD YEAR TRANSFER – ANDOVER, KS << JAYDN RICHARDSON

Richardson joined the team in the fall of 2021 after transferring from McKendree. He gained his first Division I tennis experience during the fall tournament season with the Shockers. While he was playing at McKendree, he recorded a 7-4 singles record in the 2020-21 season.

Prior to McKendree, Richardson placed fifth in Kansas state as a junior and senior and seventh as a sophomore. He compiled a record of 83-27 through his high school career.

#### Why did you choose Wichita State?

"I chose Wichita State because the coaches are amazing coaches and I get to hang with a really great group of guys. The level is really good out here, so I get to compete at a high level and practice at a high level."



### KRISTOF MINARIK >> FRESHMAN – BOLDOG, SLOVAKIA



Minarik will be joining the Shockers for the Spring 2022 semester. Minarik has a career high ATP singles ranking of 1450 and doubles ranking of 1119 with Universal Tennis Ratings (UTR) of 12.82 (singles) and 13.2 (doubles).

"We are thrilled to have Kristof become a Shocker," head coach Danny Bryan said. "He will have an immediate impact in our lineup in both singles and doubles."

In the past year, Minarik has taken down six singles players with a UTR rating above 13.0.

"Kristof's strengths on court include his forehand, his quickness around the court and his overall tennis IQ," Bryan said. "He has aspirations of becoming a professional tennis player one day, and we are looking forward to helping him achieve that goal."

#### Why did you choose Wichita State?

"Danny reached out to me in the summer and told me everything about the tennis program here, which I really liked. I believe I can improve and step up my game a lot here at WSU. The guys seemed to have built a pretty solid team here, which was confirmed to me when I got here."

## WILSON COLLEGIATE SUMMER CAMPS

**Wilson.** COLLEGIATE  
TENNIS CAMPS

[WWW.WILSONTENNISCAMPS.COM](http://WWW.WILSONTENNISCAMPS.COM)

Come train with us at the Wilson Collegiate Tennis camp at Wichita State University in beautiful Wichita, KS. Offering two weeks of incredible fun and tennis training, our camp is directed by WSU Coaches Danny Bryan and Colin Foster. Offering both full and half-day camper options, the WSU Tennis Camp has the perfect combination for everyone!

Each camper receives personal attention, advanced teaching techniques, intensive drill work, and game/match play, all in a fun and competitive environment. We break the campers into small instructional groups of similar age and ability, so each child is working in a group that is commensurate with their experience level. We tailor each program to the level of the players. Beginners get a heavy dose of swing technique and fundamentals, while more advanced players focus on strategy, point building, percentage tennis, etc. The Wilson Collegiate Tennis Camps are the premier camps for young players who strive to learn the game, improve their skills and participate in middle school, high school, USTA team tennis, or tournaments.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- > Comprehensive instructional program with daily teaching progressions
- > Small instructional groups to ensure individual attention
- > Safety prioritized on and off court
- > Camp demo program with all the latest Wilson rackets
- > Great Wilson Raffle and prizes for all campers

### 2022 CAMP DATES

- > \*Session I: May 31 - June 3
- > Session II: June 6-10
- > Session III: July 11-15

\*Four-day week due to Memorial Day



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

### JOCELYN DEVILLIERS >> PROFESSIONAL PICKLEBALL ATHLETE

Jocelyn Devilliers graduated from Wichita State in 2017 and began his professional pickleball career in 2019. He joined Team Vulcan in July 2020 after earning top-five finishes in men's pro singles and doubles at the 2019 World Pickleball Championship. Devilliers is a 17x champion on the APP Tour (Association of Pickleball Professionals).

At Wichita State, Devilliers earned all-conference honors in the Missouri Valley Conference in 2017. He also made three appearances on the MVC Scholar-Athlete First Team. In 2016, Devilliers earned the MVC Elite 18 Award.



#### How did you get into pickleball?

> "A few older tennis players introduced me to the game. I got into it more when I took the job at Chicken N Pickle as a director there, and I decided to play some tournaments and from there I made my debut on the professional tour."

#### What do you enjoy most about playing pickleball professionally?

> "I think the thing I enjoy most is the fact that it's very similar to tennis. It's very intense with a friendly atmosphere and I love being able to compete amongst the best players in the world."

#### How has your tennis experience helped you to be a successful pickleball player?

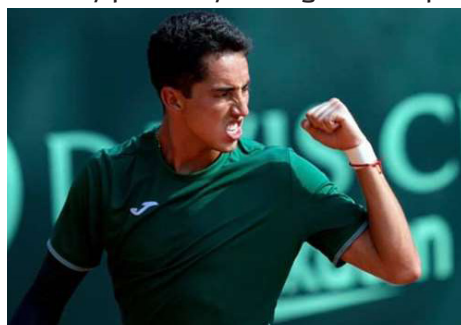
> "I truly believe that my tennis experience helped me a lot to develop my game quicker and learn how to manage emotions on court. The strokes are similar but everything is more explosive in pickleball and the focus is more intense on a shorter term."

#### What pickleball accomplishment are you most proud of?

> "I think my proudest accomplishment is when I won the championship in Vegas with Jesse Irvine, my mixed doubles partner. It was a great event and it's one of the biggest tournament of the year. You want to win that kind of tournament because you know all the top players are there."

### PROFESSIONAL TENNIS PLAYER << MURKEL DELLIEEN

Murkel Dellien finished up his Wichita State tennis career on a high note, earning AAC Player of the Year. He has continued that momentum into the start of his bright professional career. At the start of 2021, Dellien was ranked 1350 in the world in singles. He recently achieved a career-high ranking in singles of 687. Some highlights for Murkel on the professional tour include representing Bolivia in the Davis Cup 2021. He made his country proud by taking down a player ranked top 200 in the world from Belgium.



He also has achieved a ton of success in doubles on the professional circuit. He reached a career-high ranking in doubles to finish the year ranked 616. He won three Futures doubles titles in the past year, including the Wichita Open 25k where he teamed up with current Shocker Nico Acevedo. In addition, he also made the finals in two other Futures doubles tournaments. Dellien recently kicked off the new year with a lot of momentum, making it to his first semifinals of a Challenger event in early January. We look forward to watching Murkel continue to develop and make that next jump throughout 2022!

## MEET OUR NEW COACHES

### BRETT FORMAN >> ASSISTANT MEN'S TENNIS COACH



Forman joins the Shockers after serving as an assistant coach at the University of Wisconsin and volunteer assistant for both Princeton University and Michigan State University.

"I'm really excited to have Brett join our coaching staff," Bryan said. "Brett is a young, passionate coach who is going to be able to relate to our players and help us build on the past successes of our program. Brett played college tennis at a very high level at Michigan State, was a three-year captain, and had the opportunity to learn from some great college coaches the past few years."

In addition to being a three-year team captain while playing at Michigan State, he was named the Team MVP four times and tallied more than 100 singles victories and earned a national ranking in doubles during his senior season.

"I'd like to thank Danny for giving me the opportunity to work for such a great tennis program," Forman said. "I'm excited to be able to help develop our student-athletes both on and off the court and look forward to being a part of the continued growth of this great Wichita State University tennis team."

Forman graduated with a pair of degrees from Michigan State, earning a bachelor's degree in marketing and a master's degree in sports leadership and coaching.

### VOLUNTEER ASSISTANT MEN'S TENNIS COACH << DAVID BARBIERI

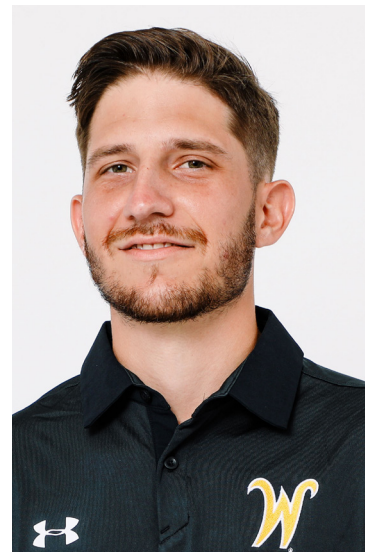
"Already we can tell he's someone who brings a lot of energy," head coach Danny Bryan said. "He's excited and motivated, and he has a good amount of experience."

Barbieri comes to the Shockers after serving as a graduate assistant coach at Jacksonville State and volunteer assistant for both Drake and Missouri.

"I'm a very passionate and intense coach who enjoys focusing on the details," Barbieri said. "Wichita State has a strong program with high expectations, and I'm looking forward to working with the team."

Prior to coaching, Barbieri was a member of the tennis team at William Woods. He also attended Bethany College, where he led his team to a No. 1 national ranking and a quarterfinal appearance at the NAIA national tournament.

Barbieri earned a master's degree in science at Jacksonville State after graduating with a bachelors' degree in science from William Woods.



### ALEXANDRA LAZAROVA >> ASSISTANT WOMEN'S TENNIS COACH



Lazarova joined the coaching staff after graduating from Wichita State in December. She played four seasons for the Shockers. As a freshman, she helped the team reach the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

"As is the case with many of the outstanding ladies that come through our program, I was able to watch as Alex transformed from a quiet freshman who at times lacked confidence into one of our leaders who always left everything on the court. Last semester she transitioned into an undergraduate assistant role and I'm excited that we're able to keep her on as our assistant coach as we head into our spring season," head coach Colin Foster said.

## LEGEND'S CUP RECAP

A big thank you to everyone who participated in the 2021 Legends Cup. The Legends Cup featured some of the best high school and adult players in the area who had that opportunity to bid on their doubles partners for the tournament. Their partners were a mix of current and former Shocker players and coaches. Matt Conrad selected Orel Ovil for the second-straight Legends Cup, and the two went on to become back-to-back champions after defeating Jackie Lin and Nick Grabon.

Overall, the Legends Cup raised \$64,000 for the Shocker tennis programs, and the Shockers had a great time playing each week!



## NICK TAYLOR

### RETIREMENT FROM WHEELCHAIR TENNIS>>



Nick Taylor retired from professional wheelchair tennis after a nearly 30-year career in November. “I don’t know if I really know yet,” Taylor said. “I think it will probably hit me more when February and March roll around and there are tournaments that I’ve been going to for twenty years that were the same week every year, and all of a sudden, I should be gearing up for them and I’m not.” Taylor is a 3x Paralympic doubles gold medalist and a singles bronze medalist. “Most people would say that the grand slams are a bigger deal, but for me nothing can beat representing your country. You have multiple shots at a grand slam every year, but you only get a shot at a gold medal once every four years.” Taylor was the No. 1 ranked doubles player in the year for 12 years and is an 11x grand slam champion.

### << BOCCIA CAREER

Taylor’s time as an athlete has not come to an end, though, as he is now pursuing a new career in boccia. He trains primarily at the Heskett Center on campus and has already competed in four international events. Knowing he was going to retire from tennis, Taylor wanted to transition into his next sport in a way that he could already be at the international level in boccia as soon as tennis was done. “What attracted me to boccia was that it was an avenue for me to channel my competitive drive and my desire to be the best I can be at something,” Taylor said. “The more I’ve gotten into it, the more I’m learning the intricacies, and that challenges me so I like it even more.”

Boccia is one of very few sports that provides an athletic opportunity for people with severe disabilities. “I love that the sport provides that opportunity for people when there aren’t a whole lot of other athletic opportunities for them.”

Taylor will still be working with the Wichita State tennis program and he hopes to be able to take on even more now that he won’t be traveling all the time for professional tennis.

