

SPORTS

GIRLS TENNIS

FITTING RIGHT IN

Roggenbuck comes from Germany and moves right into 2nd singles spot

By Eric Morken
emorken@echopress.com

Another win for the Alexandria girls tennis team had already been decided on Tuesday night with one final marathon match still going.

Teammates from both Alexandria and Rocori sat along the sideline to watch the completion of the second singles match. For the Cardinals, it was a chance for their athletes to see how their new teammate would handle a bit of a pressure situation.

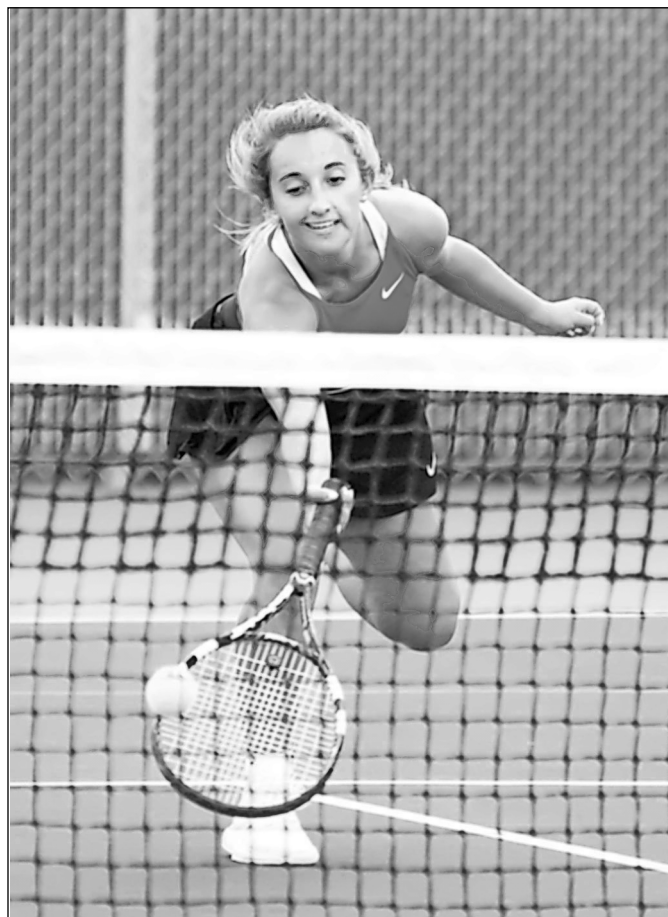
"It's a good feeling," Tabea Roggenbuck said. "You saw it. We all support each other, and I think that's really nice. It felt really good to have the support."

Roggenbuck is a foreign-exchange student from Hanover, Germany who has slid right into the top of the lineup for the Cardinals. She expressed a desire to play doubles to head coach Dave Ronning when she arrived just over a week ago, but the Cardinals needed a singles player.

"She's our second best singles player, so that just makes three and four strong for us," Ronning said. "She's all for playing the spot, which I was really happy to hear. I'm glad she's stepping in and taking that big role. One and two are big spots in singles and doubles."

Roggenbuck won her first match last week in straight sets before running into a tough opponent in Adeline Loesch of Rocori on Tuesday. Loesch had a little bit more in a back-and-forth three-setter as she won 6-4, 3-6, 6-4. The Cardinals still improved to 3-0 on the season with a 5-2 win over the Spartans.

"Put yourself in her shoes," Ronning said of Roggenbuck's addition to this team. "You come from another country.



Alexandria's Jaya Hatlestad goes all out to get to a ball at the net in her fourth singles match on Tuesday. Hatlestad won her match in three sets to help the Cardinals improve to 3-0 with the 5-2 win.

You're 16-years old. Everything is different and you're learning new things. Just coming over here alone would be scary, and then you are meeting people and have to compete. That's a lot on her plate. I don't know how I would handle that."

Brianna Holm, whose family is hosting Roggenbuck, helped her new teammate get assimilated upon her arrival in Alexandria. Holm is the Cardinals' top singles player, which provided Roggenbuck some comfort as she jumped into the lineup.

There was a lot of uncertainty of whether or not Roggenbuck would even be able to make it to Alexandria this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I was pretty scared I couldn't come," she said.

"It was quite scary, but now I'm here and I'm quite happy about it."

Roggenbuck said her hopes for this season are to bring the team forward, try to win as much as she can and just have fun being a part of this team.

Ronning said Roggenbuck is fitting right in and is great about hitting with a bunch of different teammates during practice. She has played club tennis in Germany since she was 5-years-old, and her experience shows on the court.

Roggenbuck kept a lot of balls in play against a fast and athletic player in Loesch. There was a stretch during Roggenbuck's second-set win where she attacked the net on a regular basis to put shots away.



Tabea Roggenbuck takes a break between games as she talks with Cardinals' head coach Dave Ronning during her three-set match against Rocori's Adeline Loesch on Tuesday night.

Photos by Eric Morken / Echo Press

Ronning would like to see more of that as the season goes on.

"In practice, she goes for a lot," Ronning said. "We're all that way. We practice really well and then in a match, we tense up and get the nerves. (Monday), that's what I focused on in practice. Just go out and relax and play like you practice."

Ronning can see Roggenbuck is still battling some of those early nerves in a new situation. She would beat herself up a bit after a missed shot against Loesch. Ronning knows

she cares about what goes on on the court, but he also wants her to be able to move on quickly within a match.

"I like working with people like that," Ronning said. "It's fun seeing them have success and get better at those types of things. I think she's going to be OK and just get better and better as the season goes on. I've been telling her to just continue to learn. Accept the experience and give it your best. If you don't win, you don't win. That's the way it goes."

A big win for the Cardinals

The Alexandria tennis team has a goal of competing for a Central Lakes Conference championship this year, and Tuesday's win was a step in the right direction.

Ronning said Rocori is definitely the best team the Cardinals have seen so far in the early season. Alexandria won the first four matches that got done on Tuesday to secure the win.

TENNIS: Page B2

GIRLS SOCCER

Clicking on all cylinders

By Jared Rubado
jrubado@echopress.com

The Alexandria girls soccer team had no problem scoring on Tuesday night in its home-opener.

Five second-half goals and a stellar defensive effort pushed the Cardinals to an 8-0 win over Central Lakes Conference foe Rocori.

Tuesday's win looked much different than last Thursday's did against Sartell. Alexandria moved to 2-0 by playing great in all facets of the game.

"In Sartell, we felt like we created a lot of opportunities in the first half and didn't finish," head coach Tom Roos said. "Tonight, being able to find the back this many times felt good. We had five different girls score goals tonight. That was pretty exciting to see that we can get goals in many different ways."

Allie Randazzo broke the ice 16 minutes into the game with a strike from roughly 20-feet out. Morgan Jones made it a 2-0 game 30 seconds later with a header off a pass from Randazzo. With three minutes remaining in the first half, Aubrey Kusters lobbed a shot over the head of the Rocori keeper as the Cardinals began to blow the game wide open.

"The girls had more time

with the ball at their feet, more than they'll have in other games," Roos said. "I think that allowed us to create some of our opportunities. What we have to realize is there will be opponents where we won't have as much time where we will have to play and distribute the ball quicker. With the time (Rocori) gave us, we were able to create a lot of offensive chances"

Alexandria's strikers converted on several of their chances throughout the second half. Randazzo scored her second of three goals on the night before Kylie James belted the ball over the keeper's head on a free kick to make it 5-0. James, a defender, relishes her few opportunities to score.

"That doesn't happen a whole lot for defense," James said. "It was pretty cool."

The Cardinal defensive unit was stout for the whole 80 minutes. Without allowing a quality shot on goal, goalkeeper Sophia Vinje cruised to a stress-free shutout.

"One of our goals before the game was to not allow any shots," James said. "Even if they're outside of the 18, we wanted no shots. We are very proud of ourselves for not letting any shots get through."

SOCCER: Page B2



Allie Randazzo kicks the ball from the 10-yard line for her first of three goals of the night during Alexandria's 8-0 win over Rocori on Tuesday at AAHS.

Jared Rubado / Echo Press

BOYS SOCCER

Cardinals late push ends in stalemate at Rocori

By Jared Rubado
jrubado@echopress.com

The Alexandria boys soccer team couldn't find the go-ahead goal in the final minutes of Tuesday night's road match against Rocori.

In the 37th minute, Rocori broke the scoreless tie when a Cardinal defender tipped the ball into his own net off a Spartan shot. The first half ended with Alexandria trailing 1-0.

In the second half, the Cardinals applied more offensive pressure with good ball control, which led to Holden Hansen's game-tying goal in the 59th minute. Hansen put away the loose ball off a rebound shot from Jaeger Steele.

With the Spartan's desperately hanging on in the final five minutes of the game, Alexandria kept its foot on the gas. However, the Cardinals came away with a draw to move to 0-1-1 on the season.



Hansen