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**For Immediate Release**

### **2010 CCCAA Tennis State Championships Preview**

The stage is set for the 2010 California Community College Athletic Association Dual Team State Championships. On the men's side, the #4 seed from the North Foothill College will take on the #1 seed from the South Ventura College; while on the women's side it will be North #3 De Anza against South #1 Saddleback. The team state championship event will take place on Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup> at The Tennis Club at Newport Beach. Matches are set to begin at 12:00 PM.

#### **Men's Team Preview**

Foothill (14-2-1) enters the 2010 State Championships as one of most storied programs in Northern California. Despite that, this is the first State Championship appearance for the Owls in over a decade, their last State Title coming back in 1998. Foothill reached this point thanks to a pair of singles sweeps over #6 Sierra College in the opening round and again in an upset of #2 Santa Rosa.

After breezing through the first two rounds, Foothill came face to face with their tormenter the past two years, Fresno City College, who bounced the Owls in the Northern California Championship each of the past two seasons.

Foothill struggled out of the gate dropping four of their six singles matches, and going into doubles play in a 4-2 hole. The Owls showed their depth and determination though, sweeping Fresno in the doubles round, including an impressive win by their #2 doubles team over the #2 team from Fresno which was a finalist at the vaunted Ojai Tournament earlier in the year.

Foothill's top three have shown improvement as the season has gone along. #1 player Justin Veal went 11-6 this year and advanced to the Northern California semi-finals. Their #2 Wilson Ko was 7-6 this year and their #3 Hasheem Bason went 9-4. The Owls came out the Coast Conference, where they have won three straight conference titles.

Ventura (17-0) returns to the State Championships after a year's absence. The Pirates, who along with College of the Desert, have dominated the Southern California scene for the past few years, as this is Ventura's third State Championships appearance in the last six seasons (College of the Desert was the South's representative, in all the others). Ventura won it all back in 2008.

Ventura reaches the State Championships as the #1 seed from the South, beating San Diego Mesa in the opening round 5-2, and then Mt. San Jacinto 5-3 in the regional semi-finals. The Pirates capped off their regional run with a big win over their SoCal rival College of the Desert 5-3.

The Pirates boast a deep squad that is bolstered by the play of its #2 and #3 doubles teams as well as the tail end of its singles line-up. Ventura #6 Pedro Arteaga went undefeated in team play this year, while #4 Thomas Millet and #3 Alexandre Picin have both just dropped one match this season. Millet has also teamed with the Pirates' Romain Scipione to form the #1 seeded doubles team headed in the State tournament. Ventura hails from the Western State Conference, and has won five straight WSC titles.

This will be the second meeting this year between Foothill and Ventura as the two teams squared off in the North South Challenge hosted by Fresno City College back on March 21<sup>st</sup>. The Pirates knocked off the Owls 7-2, with Foothill winning the number two and three singles matches.

### **Women's Team Preview**

De Anza is making its first appearance in the State Championships since 2003, when they lost to Grossmont College in a close 5-4 meeting. The Dons do have one State Title under their belt, as they won it all back in 1998, and became the first team from Northern California to do so.

De Anza was #3 seed in the North, beating #6 Sequoias in the regional round 5-2, and #2 Reedley 5-1 in the regional semi-finals. It was a bit of vengeance for De Anza in the semi-finals, as Reedley knocked out De Anza in the playoffs last year.

Waiting for De Anza in the Northern California finals was #1 seed Sierra College who was the North's representative in last year's State Championships. De Anza fared well in the singles matches winning at the #1, #2, #3 and #5 matches, before wrapping things up in the #1 doubles match to take a 5-4 win over Sierra.

The Dons are led by the top of their rotation with #1 "Cartoon" Phukchampa leading the charge. Phukchampa went 17-1 this year, winning the Coast Conference Championship, Northern California Championship and the prestigious Ojai Tournament as well.

Phukchampa teamed up with De Anza's #2 Diane Lutran (who went undefeated in singles play this year) to form one of the top doubles tandems in the State. The duo won the Coast Conference, lost in the finals in the Northern California Tournament and made it to the Semi-Finals in the Ojai Tournament. Rounding out their top three is #3 Samantha Lam. Lam was a nationally ranked junior player and has only gotten better for the Dons as the season has gone along.

Saddleback (17-0) comes in the 2010 State Championships for the first time since 2007. The Gauchos reached the Southern California finals last year, but were turned away by eventual State Champions College of the Desert 5-3. Saddleback is still looking for its first State Title in the program's history.

Saddleback entered the 2010 Playoffs as the #1 seed in the South, easily turning away #8 Mt. San Jacinto and #4 Irvine Valley 5-0 and 5-0. Back in the SoCal Finals for the second straight year, the Gauchos took on South #2 seed Santa Monica who proved to be a tough foe.

The Gauchos went down early 3-0, dropping their first three single matches of the day. Saddleback quickly turned things around though, getting wins from their three, four and five players, including an impressive come from behind three set win by #5 Michelle Neville 2-6, 7-5, and 6-1. After the Gauchos dropped their #1 doubles match, they came roaring back from a 3-4 hole to win their #2 and #3 doubles matches in straight sets, advancing to the State Championships 5-4.

Saddleback is a deep squad led by the play of their four through sixth players as well as their play in doubles competition. #4 Avriel Tomaiko, #5 Michelle Neville, and #6 Carrissa Fleming have gone a combined 34-3 this season, while their #2 doubles team of Erika Kagawa and Karley Pletcher and #3 double team of Michelle Neville and Carrisa Fleming have gone a combined perfect 30-0. Saddleback is also coming off of its second straight Orange Empire Conference Championship in 2010.

This will be the first meeting between the two teams this year.

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