

Girls Coach of the Year - 2007

Pete Freischlag - Downers Grove South

When Dr. Peter Freischlag looks back on his 2007 girls tennis season it will be hard to pick only one highlight. After all, Freischlag's Mustangs earned Downers Grove South a second place team finish in the IHSA tournament. His top singles player, Katie Kargl, battled her way to a third place finish, capping off her incredible run by being selected this year's Tom Pitchford sportsmanship winner. These achievements alone would make any year special - but Freischlag was only getting started.

Add to this the Mustangs' second straight sectional title, the 24th WSC championship with all eleven players earning all-conference honors, and qualifying all six varsity players for the state tournament, and it is easy to see why Freischlag calls the state weekend "magical" and why he considers this past season the realization of a coaching dream and a decade of work.

Pete's influence extends far beyond the tennis court this and every season. This year, he led his team to take up the cause of a DGS volleyball player stricken with cancer and started the "Be the Cure" foundation to raise awareness and money for cancer research. His team wore and sold bright yellow shirts highlighting the cause and his captains spoke about the project.

Praise for Pete's coaching achievements and style come from supervisors, parents, and players. Todd Cassens, DGS athletic director, writes, "I am not sure words can accurately express the importance of Peter to our tennis program. Peter Freischlag is Mustang Tennis."

Katie Kargl had the following to say about Coach Pete: "Whenever I think of the words dedicated, inspiring and caring, the first person that comes to my mind is Dr. Peter Freischlag. I have known Coach Pete since I was seven years old; I started out in his summer tennis camp. From him I learned about hard work, commitment and why it is so important to enjoy playing this sport we all love. I will never forget the days of P.E.T.E. camp, nor will I forget everything he has done for me and the type of player I am because of him. He is a role model by teaching everyone he knows to work hard, be positive and enjoy tennis."

Achievement and hard work seem very natural words to describe Freischlag. He is a former Division I tennis standout at NIU and an academic All-American. He earned bachelor's degrees in elementary and special education, a master's degree in special education, and a doctoral degree from Loyola University. Additionally, he is a certified USPTA professional. As a player, Coach Pete holds a number five Midwest ranking in the 45s and won both singles and doubles at the Midwest hard court championships in Madison.

The IHSTCA is pleased to recognize Dr. Peter Freischlag as the 2007 Girls Coach of the Year.