

Girls Coach of the Year - Class 2A

Dempsey Willard - Whitney Young High School

Dempsey Willard led Whitney Young to its best season in school history in 2016. The Dolphins continued developing into a girls' tennis power, winning a sectional title for the fourth time in the last five years. Here were a few highlights of Coach Willard's 2016 squad:

- Season record of 13-0
- Sectional champions - third in a row and fourth in five seasons
- Qualified all six players for the state meet
- Tied for 11th place at the state meet

Joyce Kenner, Whitney Young Principal, has this to share regarding Dempsey:

“Coach Willard is confident in his ability to lead. He is passionate about the game and wants to ignite that same passion in his players. His presence is felt whether he is observing matches, working with a group or individual, or talking with students and parents. He models excellence in skills, conditioning, match play, and sportsmanship. The players learn from his actions as well as his words.”

Bill Lange, Glenbrook South, adds his comments:

“Dempsey Willard has been a long, outstanding tennis player and coach on the South Side of Chicago. His contributions to the community have been shown by his interest in coaching and participating in running a summer tennis program on the South Side. I have known Dempsey for years through tournament tennis, and he has always impressed me as a fair and hard-nosed competitor.”

Congratulations, Dempsey, on your IHSTCA Coach of the Year award!