



## Cahana on schedule for memorable senior season

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Posted 12.02.03

Not only is Nataly Cahana considered one of the best females to hit the courts for the Old Dominion University tennis team but, ranked #22 in singles in the nation, she has been deemed one of one the area's players to beat regionally and nationally.

Born in Israel, Cahana, the sole senior on the women's squad, has developed in to quite the leader of her internationally diverse team, including Kerstin Endich and Barbara Kerner from Germany, Coralie Herrmann from Switzerland, and FernadaLuiz from Brazil. After doing well for the past three years, the 2003-2004 season has the leader primed to show what she is made of.

As expected, Cahana began the season in top form. In September, Cahana was en route to her first title of the year at the Cissie Leary Invite held at the Levy Courts on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania. Cahana received a first round bye and went on to collect her first win of the season with a three set victory over Ana Maslessa of Temple, 6-2, 3-6, 6-2.

After a winning the next two matches, including a win over the seventh seed, she fell short in the semifinals, losing to the fourth seed Courtney Bergman of Harvard, 6-1, 6-1. The bitter taste of defeat didn't sit too well with Cahana.

Defeat isn't something that Cahana accepts easily. Just ask her teammates, who have been awed by her play against some of the men's squad.

To win Cahana doesn't fly with reckless abandon on the court. Jon Antle, a sophomore, has been very impressed by how calm she can handle even the toughest of situations in a match.

"She is a very smart and mental tough player. She always sticks to her game plan and never gives up until the last point has been played," he said.

On Oct. 28, Cahana found herself in the finals of the ITA Regional Women's Tennis Tournament at Virginia Tech. Cahana's first match was a 6-4, 6-1 victory over Ramona But of Maryland before advancing the title with another win over another Maryland foe, Emily Marker.

The win marked Cahana's second ITA East Regional Title, having won the tournament previously as a freshman in the fall of 2000. According to Coach John Hill, the win clearly showed that Nataly is one of the top players to beat.

"Winning the ITA Regional was a great accomplishment for her. I will miss her next year. She will be a loss for the team," Coach Hill said.

With the fall season winding down, Cahana dropped a 6-3, 7-5 decision to Gitte Ostermann of Nebraska at the 2003 ITA National

Indoor Tennis Championships at the University of Michigan.

Even with the loss Cahana understands that things have to get harder.

"My senior year has been very tough. I miss being a freshman as it was my best year," she said.

The ODU tennis squad, headed up by Nataly Cahana, will return to action to begin their spring season on Jan. 23 against George Washington.

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Last Modified: 12/04/2003 09:27:14

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