

# SPORTS

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## WIAA DIV. 1 BOYS STATE TENNIS TOURNAMENT

# A most unlikely state appearance

### Wiley joins Haws for tournament as an alternate

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MADISON — If Phinehas Wiley did not have the most unusual path to competing in the WIAA Div. 1 boys state tennis tournament, he may well qualify as the player with the most unique story among match winners in the history of the event held annually at Nielsen Tennis Stadium.

Cedarburg freshman Keenan Haws qualified for the state tournament with doubles partner Brandon Khmelevsky as special qualifiers. However, circumstances changed and Wiley unexpectedly entered the picture. "Basically, Keenan's partner, Brandon, got sick, and we didn't know until the day before we were going to leave for state," Cedarburg head coach Kaila Haws explained. "He needed to get medical clearance so that Keenan could get a new partner, or Keenan was going to get defaulted."

It was not quite as simple as allowing the Bulldogs to select someone else.

"The WIAA said you can substitute, but you have to substitute with someone who didn't play (in sectional qualifying)," assistant coach Randy Haws noted. "We used all of our varsity players to play in subsectionals."

The Cedarburg coaches ultimately gave Keenan Haws two decisions to make: did he still want to participate in a tournament he and Khmelevsky worked so hard all season to qualify for, and, if so, who would he like to have as a partner from the list of eligible options?

"He said, 'I want to play with Phinehas,' which is one of his friends from volleyball," Randy Haws recalled, describing Wiley as a good athlete who plays varsity volleyball. "Keenan actually gave him his first lesson.



File photo by Mark Justesen (above), submitted photo (right)

Homestead sophomore Ryan Contardi, shown hitting a forehand earlier in the season, **above**, competed at the WIAA Div. 1 state tennis meet. He was expected to play in the tournament. **Right**, the Cedarburg duo of Phinehas Wiley, left, and Keenan Haws were more of a surprise entry. Haws qualified for the tournament with a different partner, but Wiley was an unlikely last-second replacement who helped the Bulldogs pairing win their opening-round match.

... That was the middle of March."

Oddly enough, the coach added that his son sort of predicted that Wiley would contribute to the varsity team this season.

"He made a joke, 'I'm going to help this kid get really, really good by the end of the season. Hopefully he can be an alternate on varsity,'" Randy Haws said of a scenario that ultimately played out in the biggest tournament of the season.

Wiley's journey to this point nearly ended before it started. While he got the preseason lesson,

a circumstance came up what was initially going to prevent him from joining the team. However, things worked out and he joined the squad after the first week of practices and spent the season playing doubles for the Cedarburg JV team.

By the time the postseason rolled around, the JV season had been over for a few weeks and Wiley was seemingly done with the sport for the spring. He participated in one practice session for about 35 minutes before Cedarburg's state



qualifiers left for Madison.

Randy Haws noted that he used most of that time to give the junior a crash course on the nuances of doubles play as he prepared to compete with his new partner against the best in the state.

Wiley did bring one attribute to the court that cannot be taught.

"He's 6-foot-4, so he's pretty intimidating," Randy Haws said. "I said if you can stand there and be a big body at the net,

maybe they will get a little nervous with you up there, and it did work."

The coach added that they came up with a blueprint that proved to be successful. Essentially, Wiley would make the plays at the net on shots that were within his reach, while Keenan Haws would track down everything else.

"If it comes to you, smash it," Randy Haws said in an attempt to

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## CEDARBURG FASTPITCH SOFTBALL TEAM

# Far more than just one player

### Getting the second seed provokes Bulldogs

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CEDARBURG — Cedarburg already had plenty of talent, which was on display last season when the Bulldogs qualified for the WIAA state softball tournament for the first time since 2004, but the club unintentionally got a nice boost heading into the tournament, when the North Shore Conference champions were described as a one-player team while drawing the second seed in a Div. 1 sectional bracket.

"All year long, people have been saying we're one player, and everybody knows who that one player is because she's an amazing player. She pitches, she hits, Gatorade Player of the Year, Paytn Monticelli. Our team took offense to that and after the seeding meeting, when we got the No. 2 seed, we came with a re-focused attitude to prove to

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Photo by Mark Justesen

Players from the Cedarburg girls fastpitch softball team celebrate after winning a WIAA Div. 1 sectional championship. The Bulldogs will open state tournament play today at Goodman Diamond in Madison with a quarterfinal game against Superior at 2 p.m.

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# Bulldogs: Cedarburg to open state softball tournament run today against Superior

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everybody that Cedarburg is a team, we're not one person," Cedarburg co-head coach Jeff Langkamp said last Thursday after the Bulldogs crushed top-seeded Menomonee Falls, 11-2, to return to state for the second straight season. "Today we have Cassidy Gall with a home run. Ashley LeCavalier was 3 for 3 in the nine spot, with a home run, from a freshman. Paytn did what Paytn does. Sarah Prom with great defense. I could go on and on. I'm so proud of these girls."

The message resonated and players took it to heart when the Bulldogs got the news that they were the second seed after finishing the regular season with a record of 21-4, while the Phoenix earned the top seed with a mark of 18-7.

"We were told before all of the sectional and regional play started that we were the No. 2 seed because teams thought we weren't well-rounded enough. So, our goal was to show them what well-rounded actually meant," Monticelli said after the Bulldogs topped Falls. "I think we definitely showed that today. Our pitching was there, our defense was there, Sam (Brobst) was on fire behind the plate and our hitting was just insane."

While outsiders may have viewed Cedarburg as a team that is only successful due to the efforts of Monticelli, a UW-Madison recruit who will finish her prep career at the same field she will call home once she joins the Badgers in the fall, the Bulldogs are 50-8 since the start of last season. The players have never bought into the notion that one player has done it all.

"Everyone from on the bench to in the field, everyone on our team are amazing players. I think we knew that coming into this year," said Gall, the team's sophomore shortstop. "I think it's just having

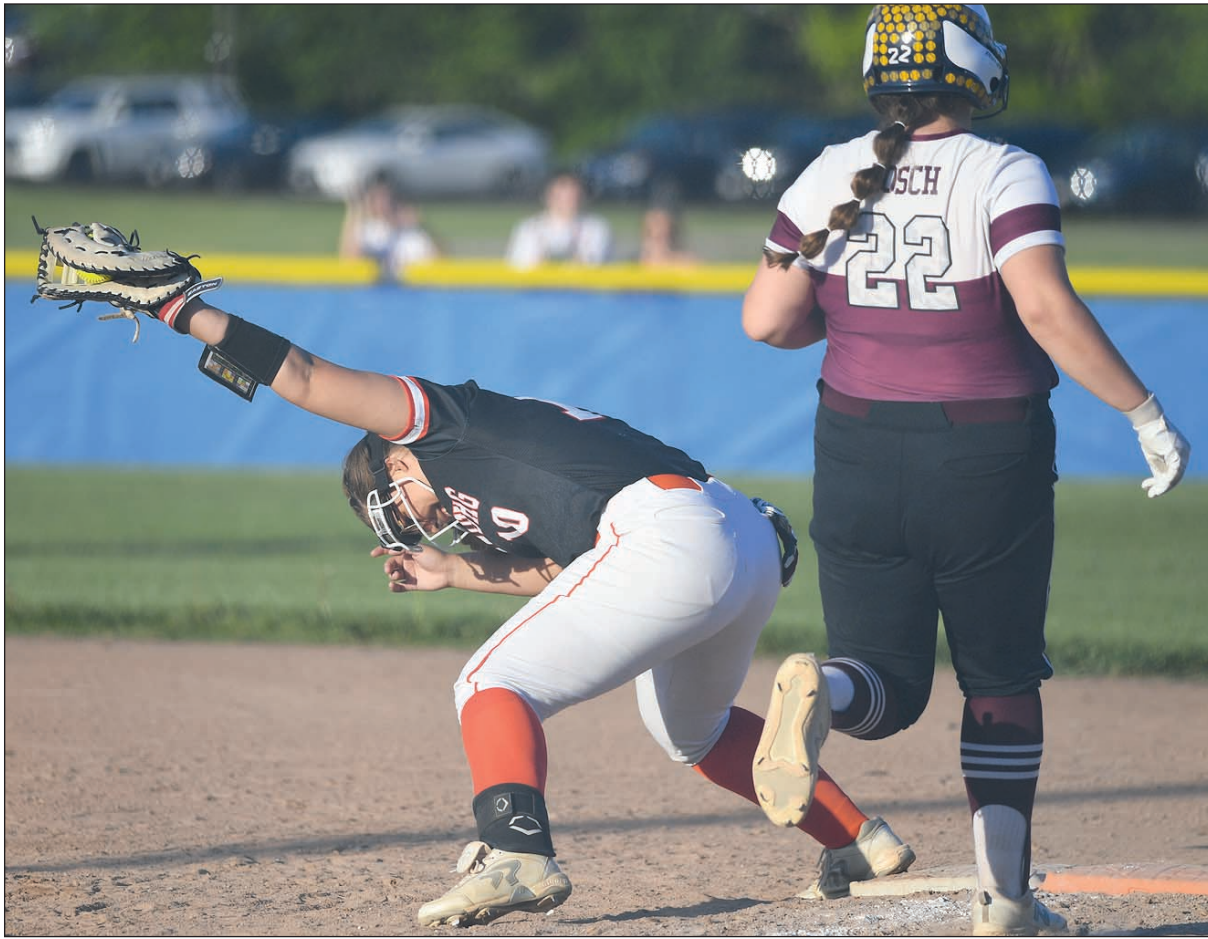


Photo by Mark Justesen

Cedarburg first baseman Maddie Moser catches a throw at first base to record the final out of the Bulldogs' sectional championship victory against Menomonee Falls.

the confidence in yourself and going up there saying, 'I can hit, I can do this,' because our coaches have all the confidence in us and our teammates are all so supportive that it really helps."

Gall has played a big role in the team's success. She enters the state tournament with a team-best .455 batting average, which includes nine doubles, three triples and five home runs. She also leads the club with 26 runs batted in and eight stolen bases. Her 45 hits are a single-season

program record. "She broke our single-season hit record in the semifinal, and added two more today. That's telling you that we're more than one person," Langkamp said following the sectional final. "She's a gamer. She loves the sport of softball. She plays her butt off all summer. She works on her game all year long and it shows."

Last year, Gall batted leadoff, Megan Lacke hit second and Prom filled the third spot in the order, with Monticelli serving as the

cleanup hitter. For most of this season, Lacke (a .360 hitter that has scored 26 runs, which is second on the team) still bats second, but Gall has shifted into the third spot and has thrived as a run-producer. Monticelli continues to hit fourth and sports a .443 average with five homers and 22 runs batted in. Prom slots in next and is hitting .400 with a team-high 12 doubles, two homers and has driven in 16 runs. She has also drawn a team-best 14 walks, which has left some RBI

opportunities for senior Maddie Moser, who has hit .377 in the sixth spot and has driven in 23.

Cedarburg has also received a boost this year from LeCavalier, who has really turned it on late in the season. The outfielder takes a .323 average and two home runs into the state tournament and she is tied for second on the team with six stolen bases while serving as a second leadoff hitter of sorts while batting ninth.

"The team has turned me into an amazing player and I really appreciate everyone," LeCavalier said. "They helped me a lot this year."

Those efforts throughout the lineup and the contributions from everybody on the roster helped the Bulldogs navigate a long season. Langkamp noted that the team was able to fight the urge to be complacent after its success last year.

"When you go to the state tournament, you come back at the beginning of the year, it's kind of like almost a letdown. It's hard to get going again because the experience was so good," he said, adding that the playoff seeding gave the Bulldogs some added motivation. "When we got seeded No. 2 in the sectional, that was the spark that we needed."

As a result, earning the sectional championship took on some extra meaning.

"They're going to have to pry it from our hands," Monticelli said while clutching the sectional championship plaque.

The state tournament begins today, with Cedarburg facing Superior in a quarterfinal contest at 2 p.m. at Goodman Diamond in Madison. With a victory, the Bulldogs would advance to play in a semifinal scheduled for Friday evening and the state final is set for Saturday at 6:30 p.m.

"(We've) got heart, and you know what? We're not done yet," Langkamp said.



Photo by Mark Justesen

Cedarburg poses for a team photo with its WIAA Div. 1 sectional championship plaque after defeating Menomonee Falls to qualify for the state tournament.

## Tennis

Continued from 1B

simplify things. "If it doesn't come to you, don't hit it."

While the whole experience was certainly unexpected, Wiley made the most of it.

"The school has a little parade where it sends off the people that were going to state, and the night before he got to be in the parade," Randy Haws said. "He was just going with the flow."

What happened when they got to Madison was shocking.

While Haws and Khmelevsky had earned a 6-2, 6-3 victory over the Kettle Moraine duo of Max Stuckey and Simon Parker about a month ago during the Cedarburg quad, now Wiley was taking the place of the Bulldogs' senior as they met that team at the state tournament.

The Cedarburg duo took the opening set, 7-6 in a tiebreaker, then reality appeared to set in when the Lasers' duo earned a 6-1 win to send the match to a tiebreaker.

"We went out there and said at this point, it's not about tennis anymore, it's about

who is going to be mentally tougher out here and can keep it together, your emotions and keep this thing going back in play," Randy Haws said, "and sure enough, we were steadier getting the ball in the court. All of a sudden, everything clicked."

The new Cedarburg team took the tiebreaker by a 10-2 margin to advance to the second round of the tournament.

"The last point of the match, Phineas did a jump straight up in the air, overhead smash, volleyball style, and he finished the match," Randy Haws recalled. "It was pretty amazing."

"When he won the last point of the match and I saw his face, and we ran out there, he almost looked like when someone who is in shock, like, what happened?" the coach added. "He didn't know what to think. Here's Keenan jumping around and he's standing there, I think, in shock."

"They really enjoyed playing together. They had great chemistry and they found a way together to pull it out," Kaila Haws added. "It was really an awesome scene."

In the next round, the Whitefish Bay duo of Ben Schneider and Kevin Ji ended the improbable run with a 6-1, 6-0 victory,

but it hardly dampened the experience.

"He even told me on the way home, 'I'll never forget this. Ever. Next year, when state happens and I'm a senior, can I at least go in the van and watch?'" Randy Haws said.

Cedarburg junior Chatton Haws also competed at state in the singles bracket and played in some of the best matches of the tournament. After receiving a bye in the opening round, the standout defeated Nolan Shaub in the second round, 7-6 (2), 2-6, 10-5.

In the Round of 16, he dropped a thriller to Middleton's Ian Connell, 5-7, 7-6 (7), 11-9. Haws had a match point opportunity in the second set and played a back-and-forth tiebreaker in which both players had match point before it was decided in a battle that went more than three hours.

Haws finished the season with a 28-2 record.

"I said to Chatton he had an amazing season," Randy Haws said. "He only had two losses on the year; one of the losses at sectionals when he cramped and he lost by two points and then in the third round, in the round of 16, he only lost by two points in the match tiebreaker."

Chatton Haws earned the seventh seed in the state bracket, which proved to be a tough spot.

"Part of it is the luck of the draw and who they seed is part of the luck as well," Randy Haws said. "He played the Union Grove kid in the second round and that match was a marathon match, too. That kid only had one loss on the year. A lot of the other scores, if you look at them, they're blowing people out of the water. Well, here's Chatton and his matches are real close, and it's not because he played poorly."

Homestead had two entries in the field at the individual state tournament.

In singles play, sophomore Ryan Contardi dropped a 6-1, 6-0 decision to Pewaukee's William Castillo in the opening round and finished his season with a record of 16-14.

The duo of Homestead junior Iliia Mikhailenko and freshman Edwin Wu earned the 15th seed in the double bracket. They earned a straight sets win (6-0, 6-2) over the West Bend East pairing of Chase Koebel and Owen Schmidt in the opening round before dropping a 6-2, 6-4 match to Marquette's Daniel Egelhoff and Jack Eisenbrown. The Homestead team finished the season with a mark of 9-6.

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