

Jourdan is Jefferson's man for all seasons

Written by Tom Fruehling

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As a four-sport varsity letter winner, Jefferson High School senior Colten Jourdan is used to switching gears (as well as gear) with the change of the seasons.

Take away his freshman season, when a New Year's Eve skiing accident in Dubuque put him out of action for about six months. With a severely broken leg, he spent three months in a wheelchair, yet still recovered enough to limp around the baseball diamond that summer.

He came back in his sophomore and junior years to go from golf in the fall, swimming in the winter and tennis in the spring before finishing with baseball in the summer. He dropped swimming this year so he could concentrate on winter training for baseball.

He began Jeff's tennis season Saturday morning playing No. 1 doubles with junior partner Daniel Britton at the seven-team Prairie Invitational meet. The pair coasted to easy wins over Marion and Western Dubuque tandems but fell in the championship match, 6-2, 6-3, to a powerhouse duo from Davenport Assumption.

At 6-foot-7 and 6-foot-4, hard-hitting Kyle Gacke and Eric Lammers from Assumption took fourth place in state doubles last year as juniors.

In the Prairie tournament's No. 1 singles competition, meanwhile, Marion junior Michael Anderson prevailed in a two-hour battle with J-Hawk Jake McDonald in the semifinals. But he, too, lost the championship 6-2 6-1 to another slugger from Assumption.

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In its first year at the Prairie meet, the Class 1A juggernaut from Davenport claimed all four singles and doubles titles on Saturday.

For his part, Jourdan said he felt pretty good about the first tennis match of the season, especially since he devotes much of his free time honing his baseball skills inside at the Perfect Game facility in southwest Cedar Rapids.

As a catcher who's noted for his defensive prowess, he's signed a letter of intent to play baseball next year at Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge. There, he plans to team up with Kennedy's ace pitcher, Alex Hayden.

An all-around athlete, Jourdan said he's always done well in whatever sport suited his fancy.

"I'm sort of a gym rat," he said. "I have pretty good hand-eye coordination, and I seem to pick things up pretty quick."

He carried an average of approximately 40 for nine holes on the Jefferson golf team, even though the only club he personally owns is a driver. "I borrowed the rest from a buddy," he explained.

As a junior, Jourdan missed going to the state swim meet in the 50 freestyle by a tenth of a second. And on the ski slopes, he learned early on to perfect back flips and multiple spins in

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the air.

"I love playing all sports," he said. "But I've decided to focus on baseball."

According to assistant tennis coach Sean Neilly, "Colten is a very good athlete, probably the best on our team. And he's so darn nice, too."

It's fitting that he teamed up with Britton on Saturday, since he also is a multi-sport talent. A three-year veteran on the Jeff bowling team, he carried a 205 average last season.



Britton has a black belt after eight years in Tae Kwon Do and recently took up mixed martial arts with a passion. "That," he said, "is a real adrenalin rush. It's real intense."

Britton also plays first chair cello in the school orchestra.

As for Marion's Anderson, he easily won his opening match 6-1 6-0 on Saturday before coming up against Jefferson's sophomore McDonald in the semifinals. Playing at the Kirkwood tennis complex, they split the first two sets and battled out a tiebreaker that Anderson won, 11-9.

"We've played lots of times before," Anderson said. "But this was the first time I beat him. So it feels pretty good."

Losing to Assumption's Luke Powers, 6-2 6-1, in the finals was not so good. "I played my hardest," Anderson said. "I just didn't have an answer for him."