

SPORT

School sports

FINALLY, ACS(I) WIN FOR 5TH C DIV GONG

Captain leads the way to sweet revenge after losing to SJI twice in earlier rounds

Rebekah Chia

Anglo-Chinese School (Independent) may have reigned supreme in the last four C Division boys' tennis tournaments, but going into the final in these National School Games on Aug 13, they considered themselves as the underdogs.

Not only did they lose twice to St Joseph's Institution (SJI) in the earlier rounds in 2024, but captain Dylan Chan's freak spinal injury a week earlier compounded matters ahead of the deciding clash.

With his chances of facing their arch-rivals in serious doubt, the

gritty 14-year-old went on a regimen of rehabilitation under a physiotherapist involving two hours of stretching daily to relieve the back pain.

On Aug 13, Dylan proved his mettle as he gave ACS(I) an unassailable 3-0 lead after a gruelling match against SJI captain Justin Lie at the Kallang Tennis Centre.

It was an intense game which became a battle of attrition as both players pushed themselves physically over the 2hr 38min tie before Justin retired with severe cramp while trailing 7-5, 6-7 (4-7), 1-2.

ACS(I) went on to win the final 4-1 for their fifth consecutive title, after victories in 2018, 2019, 2022 and 2023.

The Games were cancelled in 2020 while the C Division competition was not held in 2021.

Dylan, who took painkillers in the morning of the final, told The Straits Times: "In the first set, I already felt my left hamstring hurting and took a medical timeout.

"But I decided to push on and just play. I didn't go in expecting to win since I've lost to Justin multiple times. I just went there to play my heart out."

The Secondary 2 student added: "Like Justin, I was about to cramp, but he just cramped earlier. It



Anglo-Chinese School (Independent) captain Dylan Chan playing a shot against his St Joseph's Institution counterpart Justin Lie in the C Division boys' tennis final at the Kallang Tennis Centre on Aug 13. Dylan battled for 2hr 38min before his opponent had to retire with severe cramp. ST PHOTO: RYAN CHIONG

THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM

It's great for all my teammates too. We had a good line-up, it feels fantastic after losing to them twice.



DYLAN CHAN, ACS(I) captain, on defeating SJI captain Justin Lie for his team's 3-0 lead.

would have been nicer if we could have fought it out in the last set, but a win is a win.

"After all that hard work, it feels great to win. It's great for all my teammates too. We had a good line-up, it feels fantastic after losing to them twice."

Joshua Kuan, who beat Elias Siirtola 6-4, 6-2, and the doubles pair of Andre Lee and Miles Teo, who downed Cedric Tan and Asher Sandhu 6-2, 6-2, had put ACS(I) 2-0 up.

After Dylan's heroics, doubles duo Takuya Kaneko and Brennon Ng clinched SJI's sole point with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Emmanuel Suripin and Koh Heng Kai.

Matthew Tay then overcame Raphael Goh 6-1, 6-2.

The result was in contrast to the meetings between the two rivals this season when SJI won 5-0 in May's pool stage and 3-2 in the league round in July.

Andre and Miles attributed their win to their teamwork.

Miles said: "We're quite close to each other, so it was very easy to keep going with the match."

Andre added: "We always plan out the points before we start and tell each other what we are going to try to do."

ACS(I) coach Ang Hock Chai, 56, hailed the players' never-give-up attitude as he upped their training sessions from two to at least three or four times a week in preparation for the final.

He said: "We just tell them to re-

lax and play. Play one point at a time until the end, and we will know the results at the end."

SJI's Takuya, 12, was upbeat despite the loss, saying: "Although we didn't get the outcomes we wanted, I think that all of us did great and we really tried our best."

His doubles partner Brennon, 14, added: "It was a good fight, and next year we will come back stronger."

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Hamby sues over pregnancy bias

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles Sparks forward Dearica Hamby sued her former team, the Las Vegas Aces, and the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) in federal court on Aug 12, alleging workplace discrimination and retaliation stemming from her pregnancy.

The lawsuit, filed in the US District Court of Nevada, claims that Aces coach Becky Hammon accused Hamby of signing a contract extension with the team while knowingly pregnant.

Hamby, on the other hand, argued that she found out she was pregnant with her second child only a month after signing the extension during the 2022 season.

She also alleges Hammon said the Aces staff believed she would "get pregnant again for a third time". When Hamby asked Hammon if she was being traded because she was pregnant, Hammon did not deny it, per the lawsuit.

"The WNBA is, at its core, a workplace, and federal laws have long shielded pregnant women from discrimination on the job," Hamby's legal team said in a state-



American Dearica Hamby watching her shot go in during the Paris Olympic Games' women's 3x3 basketball pool-round game against China at La Concorde on Aug 3. The United States triumphed 14-12. PHOTO: AFP

ment. "The Aces exiled Dearica Hamby for becoming pregnant and the WNBA responded with a light tap on the wrist. Every potential mother in the league is now on notice that childbirth could change

their career prospects overnight. "That can't be right in one of the most prosperous and dynamic women's professional sports leagues in America."

The Aces traded Hamby to the Sparks in January 2023 after eight seasons with the San Antonio/Las Vegas franchise. She was the Sixth Player of the Year Award winner in 2019 and 2020 and an All-Star in 2021, 2022 and 2024.

Hamby also accuses the WNBA of not adequately investigating her complaint when she initially brought it to the league office. After she levelled the complaint, her marketing contract with the league was not renewed.

"We are aware of today's legal filing and are reviewing the complaint," the WNBA said in a statement to The Athletic.

The Aces have not commented on the suit.

Hammon denied mistreating Hamby at a news conference before the 2023 season, saying that "once I made the phone call that

the decision has been made to move her – you know, that's when everything kind of fell apart".

That year, the WNBA suspended Hammon for two games for violating its Respect in the Workplace policies over private comments the coach made about Hamby's pregnancy.

The Aces also forfeited their 2025 first-round draft pick due to impermissible benefits offered to Hamby during extension negotiations.

The Aug 12 lawsuit revealed that the Aces allegedly agreed to cover private school tuition for Hamby's elder child in the form of a "donation" to the school.

Hamby, 30, was named to her third career All-Star team this season. She is averaging 19.2 points, 10.0 rebounds and 3.5 assists – all career highs – through 24 games (all starts).

She has put up averages of 10.0 points, 6.0 rebounds and 1.6 assists in her 306-game career (128 starts). REUTERS



Brandt Snedeker, competing in the Wyndham Championship, will serve as one of Keegan Bradley's vice-captains, along with Webb Simpson. PHOTO: REUTERS

Snedeker joins US Ryder Cup leadership

LOS ANGELES – Brandt Snedeker will serve as one of Keegan Bradley's vice-captains on the United States Ryder Cup team who will try to reclaim the trophy from Europe in 2025 at Bethpage Black in New York, the PGA of America said on Aug 12.

Snedeker, a nine-time winner on the PGA Tour who was named the US-based circuit's Rookie of the Year in 2007, joins previously appointed former US Open champion Webb Simpson as a vice-captain on Bradley's staff.

"As I've started preparing for the 2025 Ryder Cup, I quickly realised that Brandt was someone I wanted by my side," Bradley, who was announced as captain in July, said in a statement.

"Having competed in two Ryder Cups, including a stellar individual performance in 2016, Brandt's experience and insight will surely be beneficial to our team in the months ahead."

The 2025 Ryder Cup will be Snedeker's first stint as a vice-

captain in the biennial team event.

The 43-year-old Nashville, Tennessee native has played in two Ryder Cups, compiling a 4-2-0 career record, including 3-0-0 as the only undefeated American in 2016.

He was pleased to be named as vice-captain.

"The Ryder Cup is unlike anything in our sport and I hope to bring the passion and pride to help Keegan deliver his vision of what a Ryder Cup in New York should look like," said Snedeker. "I am so excited to serve alongside my good friend Webb and know we will do everything in our power to help Keegan and the players be ready for a great competition next September at Bethpage Black."

Additional vice-captains will be announced at a later date.

In July, 15-time Major champion Tiger Woods explained that with his added responsibilities as a member of the PGA Tour policy board, among other factors, he was not confident in becoming captain and giving the role his full focus.

The 38-year-old Bradley, winner of the 2011 PGA Championship, was therefore named as captain.

"That does not mean I wouldn't want to captain a team in the future. If and when I feel it is the right time, I will put my hat in the ring for this committee to decide," added Woods. REUTERS, AFP

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