Austin Waara returns a shot during tennis action at Nelson Field last week. As WIC's first singles starter, Waara goes head to head with the best player on every opposing team.

IRON RIVER—West Iron's boys tennis team got a heavy dose of Marquette County foes last week. After it ended, Coach Joe Serbentas was grateful Negaunee and Marquette compete in Division 1—they won't face the Wykons in the Division 2 U.P. State Finals.

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The Wykons defeated Ishpeming 7-1 on May 14 but were blanked 8-0 by Negaunee May 15 and fell 6-2 to Marquette on May 16.

The latter two matches were at Nelson Field, but the Miners and Marquette made themselves feel right at home.

First, at Ishpeming, the Wykons dominated the Hematites. In six of the eight matches, West Iron lost no more than two games, and both No. 1 Austin Waara and No. 2 Caleb Pellizzer won 6-0, 6-0.

The only loss was a dogfight featuring freshmen Alec Schmelebeck and Tristan Nelson. After losing 6-1, they won a second set tiebreak and battled hard before losing the third set 6-4.

Coach Serbentas noted how his players are starting to rally longer, "making for some fun points to watch."

Negaunee, a senior-led team generally regarded as the U.P.'s dominant boys squad this spring, rolled past the Wykons. The Wykons were blanked in one match and won just one game in three others.

Schmelebeck and Connor O'Donnell, at third doubles, were in the only three-set match, finally falling 6-1,. 5-7, 6-3.

Waara, at first singles, lost 6-1, 6-4 but made Dave Terzaghi work hard in the second set. Overall, it was a learning experience, and their coach said the Wykons learned. "They know playing a team of this caliber only makes you better."

West Iron only had 24 hours to recover before hosting Marquette, and the visitors went home with a 6-2 win. Alex Ralston (fourth singles) and Joey Misoni-Max Maloney (fourth doubles) got the only wins. Aside from them, West Iron won only one set, from O'Donnell and Schmelebeck at third doubles.

"The doubles are steadily improving with each match," Serbentas noted. "Marquette has a solid team."

• The Wykons host Division 1 Kingsford on May 22 and take part in the Great Northern Conference tournament at Kingsford on May 24.

One final dual match (vs. Escanaba at Nelson Field May 29) before the Division 2 U.P. State Finals, taking place at Kingsford (hosted by Iron Mountain) on May 30..