PICKENS LOSES TO HARRIS

Owls Win Rice Tennis Tourney

By CHUCK YOUNG

Thresher Sports Writer

Last Sunday, March 27, for the third time in the eight-year history of the Rice tennis tournament, the Owls won the team trophy.

Although they had to conquer two different style courts and adverse weather conditions, Rice defeated defending and five-time champion Trinity University, 18-16.

Victory was based largely on the play of John Pickens and Butch Seewagen, although Chip Travis contributed three valuable points before bowing to third-seeded Ben Anzola of Wichita State in the quarterfinals.

Trinity's Harris

Pickens, number one singles seed, met second-seeded Bill Harris, Trinity's 19-year-old suave freshman, in the final round Saturday. During the first set and through most of the second, it looked as though he would defeat Harris, semifinal victor over the fourth-seeded Seewagen.

The Rice junior ranked 16th nationally, took the first set easily in 6-1 and had Harris down at 5-3, match point, in the second. Then Harris' excellent ground strokes forced countless net errors from Pickens. Harris broke Pickens' serve twice to win the set 7-5.

Waiting Game

The third set was almost a replay of the second, Pickens first breaking Harris' service, then yielding his own service twice to the blond Floridian. Harris won 7-5 to take the singles championship. Harris played a waiting game throughout the match, relying on his ground strokes and rarely going to the net.

In the doubles, Pickens and Seewagen fought through two darkness-delayed matches to earn the right to meet Harris and Frank Conner in the finals at River Conner in the finals at River Oaks on Sunday. The Owls avenged their singles losses to Harris, 4-6, 8-6, 6-3, to win the team trophy.

The otherwise excellent tournament was marred by the cold damp weather which caused many of the matches to be played at River Oaks. This produced the unfortunate situation of having the same competitors play on two different surfaces on the same day. The River Oaks' courts are clay, as opposed to the Lay-Kold Rice courts.

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