

# Boys Coach of the Year - 2006

## *Bill Wham – Lyons Township*

Lyons Township High School had its best boys tennis season in school history in 2006, culminating in a second place finish at the state tournament in May. Lyons finished a perfect 10-0 in dual matches, tied for first place in the West Suburban Silver Conference, and won the very difficult Lyons sectional, finishing two points ahead of rival Hinsdale Central.

When one thinks of Lyons tennis, the image that comes to mind is of a well-coached, classy team. This is most certainly a reflection of their head coach, this year's coach of the year, Bill Wham.

The second place state finish was truly a team effort in '06. All six players advanced through the sectional and scored points at the state meet. Singles star Jordan Knue scored eight points, finishing in the state's top twelve. Grant Kassel added four singles points for the Lions. Lyons' second doubles team, Hector Guerra and Sean Chiricotti, gained four valuable points, while the top doubles duo of John Smits and Dave Robare lost an epic three-set match in the state finals, picking up fourteen points for LTHS.

One of Coach Wham's goals is to create a sense of team. As we all know, this can sometimes be very difficult within an individual sport such as tennis. Bill's athletic director, John Grundke, mentioned that Bill tries very hard to get the boys to work together and sacrifice individual goals for the betterment of the team.

Bill works hard during the season to make his players not only competitive on the courts but well-rounded off the tennis courts. He is a part-time instructor at the Score Tennis and Fitness club during the winter. In the summer, he continues to teach tennis at the Salt Creek Club, working with adults as well as running a high school program. Bill also volunteers his time working with kids who do not have the money to pay for lessons. According to Bill, "I get a lot of satisfaction watching these kids improve, seeing them make their high school teams, and obtaining success on the courts."

Athletic director John Grundke further writes, "Coach Wham is a magnet for class student athletes. They want to do well for themselves, their team and for their coach. Coach Wham is always looking for extra ways to help student athletes achieve more. He strives to make his athletes become successful people, not just athletes."

Congratulations, Coach Wham on a great 2006 season. You truly deserve this year's Coach of the Year award.