

# The Love Connection



**Bitburg Baron Tennis Team 1997.** *Top Row, (L-R):* Coach Vadney, Penny Huber, Shawn Layman, Bryan Richardson, Travis Carr, Alex Malavakis, Wesley Geyer, Adam Vigue, Dan Loftus. *Bottom Row:* Natasha Lyons, Stephanie Shearin, Kira Shearin, Tillie Macias, Jennifer Shank, Bethany Hilgers, Ryan Hilgers, Kirstjen Peters, Maela Ramos, Deana Benner, Brandy Nix. *(Italics indicates middle schoolers.)*

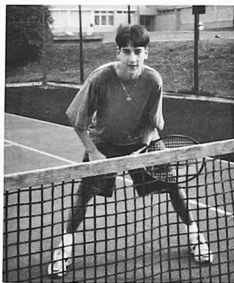
Game, set, match! The 1997 Bitburg Baron tennis team came out on top, thanks to the talent and enthusiasm of its players.

This year's schedule proved to be a challenge because the tennis team had to play some of the top teams in Europe, including Heidelberg, Patch and SHAPE.

The guys, competing with only six players, ended the season with a 1-5 record. The girls, however, ended with a 4-2 overall record.

Seven of the team's top players attended the European championship tournament at Wiesbaden. Although only two of them placed, everyone was victorious in spirit.

In the semi-finals of the tournament, the Hilgers sisters had to face each other to see who would go on to play in the championship game. After an exciting match of Bitburg vs. Bitburg, Ryan Hilgers went on to win the girl's championship for the second year in a row, and Bethany Hilgers, playing on a sprained ankle, came in 4th.



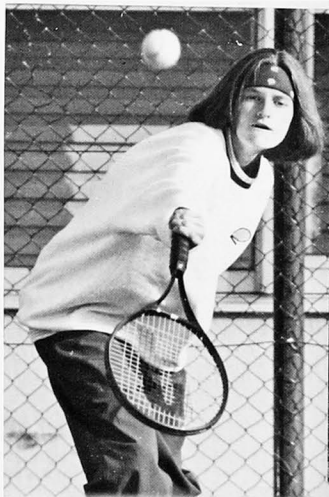
Shawn Layman tries to psyche out his opponent as he gets ready to return a shot.



Stephanie Shearin slams a serve to her opponent from Baumholder.



Kirstjen Peters shows Bryan Richardson how to smile properly.



Brandy Nix concentrates on forming a perfect slice backhand.

# Tennis