Playing together helped PH pair win state title

By JACK BOGACZYK
Sports Writer

A neighborly situation which created years of experience on the tennis court finally paid off last weekend for Bobby McIntosh and Randy Dickey.

The pair, which has played doubles together longer than either one of the duo can exactly recall, captured the state 3-A doubles championship for Patrick Henry on Saturday in Hampton. It was the first state 3-A tennis title for Roanoke area players in recent years.

The win, over Vince Thomas and Sam Adsit of Norfolk Maury, capped an unbeaten season and schoolboy careers for the twosome. Both will graduate from PH early next month.

"We live about five blocks apart," said Dickey, who lives on Rosalind Avenue, SW, while McIntosh hails from Peakwood Drive, SW. "We've been playing together about six years now, I guess. After a while, you just get used to doing the same things."

McIntosh says the pairing has been together on the court longer than Dickey remembered. "I think we first played together in about the third or fourth grade," said McIntosh. "I know it's been a long time."

The duo lost last year in the regionals to a team from E.C. Glass, but earned a state berth this season on an individual basis without their PH teammates. McIntosh and Dickey both seem to perform better in doubles than in singles, and their perfect 9-0 record presents some proof.

"I guess I just play half court a lot better than the whole court," said McIntosh, searching for the reason for the pair's doubles success. "I enjoy playing the net and I have a lot more confidence up there. Randy does most of the backcourt running and has the big serve."

McIntosh and Dickey had to rally in both the semifinal and final matches after dropping the first set both times. The Maury team won the opener, 6-4, before the PH boys came back with 6-4 and 6-3 victories for the title.

"Coach (Carnis) Poindexter was a lot of help," said Dickey. "He was allowed to coach from the sidelines and he gave us a lot of basic stuff to think about. He sort of analyzed the players for us. But the biggest thing was he told us to settle down and just stroke the ball. We were hitting it much too hard."

"I really don't think we had a letdown the whole year," said Dickey of the doubles pair. "When we beat Glass the first time (the only PH point in an 8-1 loss on April 21) that gave us a lot of confidence. It made me feel pretty good about our chances this year, and Bobby, too."