

Miguel Flores, from Mexico with love

By DJ Barger

One of the more exciting recruits to SLU's athletics teams this year has been Luis Miguel Flores. Several schools competed to bring the freshman from Mexico City to their campus, but a variety of factors contributed to SLU's win the recruiting battle. Flores has already proven an excellent addition to the Billikens Men's Tennis Team.

It might be easy for someone who was heavily recruited to be over-confident and self-centered, but Flores is anything but that. Always willing to praise others, Flores enjoys the experience of being at SLU and being on a team.

Miguel Flores grew up in Mexico City and speaks Spanish and English. For a time he played both soccer and tennis, but tennis quickly gained his favor.

"I would always get injured playing soccer. I decided tennis was healthier," says Flores. "I would play every day except Monday when the club was closed."

As he became better at tennis, Flores was invited to play in tournaments in both Mexico and the United States. Many of these tournaments took place in Texas and Florida, where he quickly caught the eye of many Division I coaches. He reached as high as No. 3 in Mexico's rankings for juniors and won five state championships.

But Flores' eyes were set on Saint Louis University, far away from Mexico City, Texas or Florida. He first met a former SLU player while training in Texas. After learning of SLU, he decided to further research the university and was even more impressed. The campus, Coach Jon Zych and the team all left him with a desire to return as a student-athlete.

Now having arrived, Flores is very happy to be here, saying, "there are a lot of things to do." According to Head Coach Jon Zych, Flores worked exceptionally hard to become eligible for the fall season.

Flores is also excited to be on a team, something he isn't used to. "It's kind of different, but I really like it," he says. Flores added that he is impressed with his teammates thus far. "Bobby [Kidera]...plays at a really high level. He's always playing the best tennis at the most important moments."

Zych's effect on the team, according to Flores, is very positive and professional. "He supports and challenges us to be good at tennis and school."

Flores is majoring in Business in the John Cook School of Business. His favorite class is Writing for International Students, which has helped him improve his English. After leaving SLU, Flores hopes to turn pro and follow in the footsteps of his favorite players, Roger Federer and David Ferrer. If his dreams of going pro don't work out, Flores would like to use his business degree to be a stockbroker or financial adviser.

Flores and the rest of the SLU Men's Tennis Team will play next in a tournament on Oct. 14, hosted by Southern Illinois at Carbondale.