



NCAA DIVISION I MEN'S TENNIS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP -- (1) FLORIDA DEF. (2) BAYLOR, 4-1

Florida Head Coach Bryan Shelton

On his son Ben clinching the match...

"We've got a very, very special team for him to be a major part of that. It's really, really cool to see him shine in the biggest on the biggest stage under the lights tonight here at the USDA national campus. Just really, really proud of him. Proud of our guys."

On if he thought the team was in a good position even after losing doubles...

"I really did. I went through video and notes throughout the day, you know, after a match last night. And, you know, I looked at what we'd been doing. I looked at Baylor and I felt like I felt like we're going to have a really good chance tonight to be successful. I felt like our guys were in perfect shape physically and mentally. They're in good places from one to six in our lineup. And so I felt like our doubles was really starting to take form. And so super, super confident, had a big smile on my face after we lost the doubles point, knowing that this is going to be a fun. That's going to be a battle now. Now we've got to win four of these six, but we've got the guys to do it."

On the atmosphere at the USTA National Campus...

"It's incredible. I mean, it's just incredible. I mean, to think, you know, college tennis is really special. You know, I just don't see in professional tennis, the fans interact with the players and coaches the way they do in college, tennis and the Florida fans. I mean, they came out, you know, a lot of them drove to get here, you know, a couple of hours and to look up in the stands and always see that support. And we're tired. I mean, our guys had to play the late session three days in a row, you know, and getting to bed at 2:00 and 3:00 in the morning. That takes a lot out of your body. But after every point to look up and see the fans and see them over the railing and just coming and so excited, it just fed our guys with energy. Sam and Andy just playing their hearts out and there's nothing was going to stop us. But the fans had a huge part in that for sure."

On building the Florida program to get to this stage...

Well, I think some things were confirmed, you know, through this process that I think character matters. I think building a culture and helping guys develop there as people, number one, that that matters, being able to trust and ask others to trust you and working hand-in-hand together to do something as a group, I

think is pretty special. And so all those things were confirmed. And when I came to Florida, you know, the mission was let's try to really develop the culture and let's get the character to a place where it's something that we can be proud of knowing that we're moving guys lives in the right direction, that we're also helping them become better tennis players. And if we do things the right way for long enough, then good things will eventually happen. And so that's kind of been our motto is just treat people the way you want to be treated, work hard every day, do things the right way, and try to bring in players that are going to fit your style. And we've just got high character guys on this team. I've got two amazing coaches and Tanner Stump and Scott Pearlman that that do a lot of the heavy lifting. A lot of times everyone's looking at me, but we've got so many people, like Ben said, that do the heavy lifting. Kate Harte our operations director, is amazing as well. So having good people around you is something that I've learned along the way, is that's so important. There's only one person in me. But if we've got a group of people and we're all working together in the same direction, great things can happen. You can do a lot more, you can impact much more. And so it's just I'm humbled to be a part of this thing to to be the leader of the program, but to work together collaboratively with the other coaches and players and know that we're united together and everybody takes ownership in this thing.”

Florida Freshman Ben Shelton

On performing so well on the biggest stage...

“This team made it so easy. We have we have the best support staff in the nation and we have the best strength coach, the best athletic trainers, the best coaching staff, the best head coach, the best captains. I mean, unbelievable. Like, whenever I'm out there and I'm looking down the courts and not knowing how it's going or how it's going to come out and what's going to happen at the end of the match, it makes it so easy to just battle knowing that every single guy out there is battling so hard. The guy next to me Bick [Blaise Bicknell] has just been a rock all year. I mean, the guy, he hasn't lost and he was going to get it done tonight. And just knowing that they don't they don't need my point. And I can just play freely and know that everyone else on the team is going to come through. It's ia really good feeling to be out there with them.”

Florida Senior Duarte Vale

On his confidence in his teammates...

“That's what makes our job so easy, is that, you know, you're able to go out there and play freely and you know that every single person is going to come through with the competitiveness and the high level to be able to have an opportunity to win. And, you know, at the end of the day, you know, that you're in a good place to get four points on the board, some way or another. And to me, that's just. And so it's inspiring to just keep fighting and keep digging, keep trying to find the higher level. So, I mean, all our guys are absolutely incredible.”

On what it means to win a national title..

“It means the world to me. I was telling coach that I don't even know how to act, you know? But, yeah, it just you put all this focus and attention and the hard work and you always see we are very process oriented team, so we don't talk too much about big goals, but it's there in the back of your head. And it's one of the things that when coach talks about extra work, it's one of the things driving you to do it. It's like, come on, we can we can do something special and just keep working and just keep pushing. And the days that you don't want to you keep going. And now we did it. So, I mean, to me, couldn't feel more special

because. Not even because, of course, it's a national title was a huge thing, and but to do it with the people that we did it with, I mean, there's no words"

Florida Junior Sam Riffice

On what he was thinking after he won his match...

"I have full faith we're going to win all six singles every time I step on the court. And I mean, even Duarte, he's going to come back. He plays his best tennis when he's pushed against the wall. So I just picked a court and gave it my all to support them. And I knew the guys behind me were going to support the other courts and they were going to come up big. It was just who's going to take it first."

Baylor Head Coach Michael Woodson

On the team's run to the final and the season...

"Yeah, I'm just, you know, just finished talking to the guys for a couple of minutes. I'm so proud of everything that they've accomplished. You know, it's not it's not as much about the tennis. Obviously, the tennis is fantastic. The stats, the records, the titles all speak for themselves. Making it to this point in the season, you know, really does speak for itself. It's the way that these young men carried themselves. You know, we were able to play 39 matches this year, which is truly incredible. You know, a lot of credit needs to go to our athletic department, to our administration, you know, our health and safety staff to be able to keep our guys safe. But, you know, provide them opportunities to train and compete. And then the players themselves, I mean, they've sacrificed so much this year where we didn't have any stoppages. We barely had any adjustments at all throughout the season. It was almost business as usual. And, you know, that's a credit to the sacrifices that these young men made through what was a very difficult time. And, you know, they banded together extremely well. And I think the result was was lots and lots of success. And obviously, it hurts. You know, it hurts more that we don't get to do it again than than it hurts that that we lost tonight. You know, honestly, it's just a tennis match. It's not that big of a deal. It's more that we just get to spend this time together, you know, and I'm going to miss, miss these seniors and miss this group of guys, this particular group of guys together. You know, I love them so much and they mean so much to me and my family and to the Baylor family that it's going to be hard not to have them around day in and day out. But I know they're going to have extremely bright futures. And I can assure you that this team is going to be back and better than ever next year."

Baylor Senior Constantin Frantzen

On the season and his career at Baylor...

"I mean, obviously, we had an unbelievable season, the best season I have in my five years at Baylor. And I mean, we've won a lot this this year, as coach said. And obviously it's unfortunate that we couldn't get the job done today. And congrats to the Gators for that. They outcompeted us today. And yeah, I mean, it means the world to me that we even had a chance to play in the final today. And it's huge. Thank you for the Baylor Athletic Department and all the staff members around the team, my team members, my coaches and just everybody who was a part doing my last five years here, Baylor. And I don't know how to thank them for that. What they experienced, they gave me."