



NCAA DIVISION I MEN'S TENNIS THIRD ROUND – (4) TEXAS DEF. (12) USC, 4-3

Texas Head Coach Bruce Berque

On getting through a tough match to reach the semifinals ...

“It’s unreal. We’ll never take that for granted. I told the team that it’s hard enough to get here to the Sweet 16; there’s a lot of really good teams that didn’t make it that far. So we don’t take that lightly, and then to take it one step further to get to the quarters when we had our backs against the wall against South Carolina, who was a really good team. That was massive. Somehow we might have found a way to top it. It’s an amazing accomplishment, especially for a young team, but I couldn’t be more proud of our team.”

On Texas being 10-1 in 4-3 matches this season ...

“I think I’m going to have to spend some time figuring out what worked this year so I can bottle it and use it for future years. Obviously if it happens once or twice or three times, you might chalk it up to luck, you win some you lose some. When it happens this many times I gotta feel like there’s some special character on this team. That’s gotta have something to do with it. We’ve got a lot of guys that love tennis and compete hard and have each other’s backs in the big moments. I think it’s also a little bit of a snowball effect, where you win two or three of them and you get a little more belief. If you lose three or four of them, then you probably have a little less belief. Fortunately that’s been feeding on itself.”

On if he feels more comfortable now as compared to 2019, when the Longhorns eventually won the National Title while he was interim head coach ...

“For one thing, I know I have a job. So that’s comforting. Honestly, back then that really wasn’t my thought process at all. I was just trying to help the team and do everything I could to support them. Not really, to be honest. The time of the day that I feel the best is believe it or not as the match is going on, and in practice when I’m on the court. These late matches, I have a little too much time on my hands during the day. That’s when I get a little stressed out. ... Once I get here and I’m actually interacting with the team and doing my part to help the guys prepare for and compete in the match, then I feel good. ... It’s exciting to be in this environment. It’s really fun to see the joy on our guy’s faces when they have the success that they’re having here. It’s a lot of fun.”

Texas Sophomore Cleeve Harper

On clinching the victory ...

“When you’re in a 3-all match in the last eight, it’s a little nerve-wracking. My coaches always preach to me to trust myself and play aggressive. I just tried to play my game. It ended up working out for me. It’s an unbelievable feeling and it’s one I’ll remember forever.”

On the environment ...

“I was here a couple years ago with the team that won; I was redshirting. I got to experience the environment even though I wasn’t playing. It was a lot of fun watching the guys, and the crowd out there. Today I got to experience it first-hand. For me it felt great. Even if the fans aren’t cheering for me, and some of them are, I just love it. I love just the noise and the atmosphere out there. I kind of thrive on that, so I really enjoyed it.”

USC Head Coach Brett Masi

On the match today...

“We split the singles there. I thought we had an edge there in doubles, but Texas fought back which we knew that going in. They are a really gritty team, they never let up so it’s slightly disappointing we lost that doubles point because if you go into singles and you split them. We had a chance there I thought at 3,4 and 5 I would put my life on it that those guys would take the first sets just because they have been so clutch all year, and not that they weren’t tonight, maybe Texas you know it was their day.

I’m super proud of our team and the effort we’ve given all year battling through testing and not having a social life as a student-athlete in USC just coming to practice and go to school, coming to practice and go to school, Zoom, test, living in a one-bedroom hotel each night, it’s not easy mentally and emotionally for those guys, but I’m just very proud and happy of what we did accomplish this year for sure.”