



NCAA DIVISION I MEN'S TENNIS SEMIFINALS -- (2) BAYLOR DEF. (3) TENNESSEE, 4-2

Baylor Head Coach Michael Woodson

On his perspective on the match ending, which saw Baylor's No. 1 and 2 singles players Matias Soto and Adrian Boitan competing side-by-side to clinch...

"Honestly I felt like we were in a really good position. Even though we had opportunities in both matches and kind of let them go a couple times, I feel like we went for our shots and that's all we can ask of those guys. They trusted themselves in the big moments and we came out on top. The fact that they were out there together made a huge difference, and credit to both of them for fighting, just hanging in there. ... I think it's been a theme for us since the beginning of the year. I think we've had a little bit of a chip on our shoulder. I think everybody knew we were going to be good at 4-5-6, but what are we going to be able to do at 1-2-3, and so for the guys to come out like they did and be in that position ... and to have those guys in that moment is special and they deserve it."

On reaching the National Championship match ...

"I think for us it's just enjoying every single day that we spend together. I'm a little bit sad that we only get to play one more match. I haven't thought so much about, 'Oh, what if we lose today,' then we don't even get another match. I was hoping we would get to this opportunity so we could sit down together and everybody knows this is it – we're going to empty the tank and enjoy one last ride together. So no, it hasn't really hit me, but it is sad to think about."

On if this was one of the craziest matches he's been a part of as a coach ...

"Yes. I think it was a bit of a wild match, but we just trusted that we were going to be able to get the job done, frankly. I felt a lot of confidence in those guys in those situations with the match on their racquet and they're going to be able to come through, and as long as they trusted themselves we'd be willing to live with the result. I definitely think it was one of the more wild matches, and I feel like the best part about it was that we really didn't show many nerves through most of it. Sometimes you get into those situations and it's an error-fest from both teams and nobody can hold serve. It really didn't feel that way at the end, which kind of makes it feel a little bit more normal, to be honest, not like a National Semifinal."

On potentially meeting Florida or Texas in the final...

"We're just happy to be in the championship match. Both of them would be worth opponents, and I think we're going to have something to prove against whoever it is. Just excited to be there. We would be honored to play either one. They played such a close match last time they played, and I think both teams

have grown and improved since then. It's going to be an absolute war tonight, so I'm excited that we're done and can start resting while they can duke it out.

This Florida team we played two years ago, and it's basically the same group of guys, with the exception of their No. 4 and 5 players, so we know them quite well. And we obviously know Texas better than we might even know ourselves. ... I think tomorrow it's going to be very little about the tennis and it's going to be a lot more about how we handle the moment and who's going to embrace the pressure together as a team."

Baylor Junior Matias Soto

On the ending of the match...

"It wasn't easy, of course. We had so many opportunities ... We were ready for those kind of moments with the pressure, and we trust in ourselves. That's the main thing with this team. We play big in those moments. I was thinking, it's either me or it's Adi. We were both ready for those moments. We had so many opportunities – at some point it'll come our way. That's what I was thinking before I went to play the last point – just leave everything out there.

"I think it was just one more match. We haven't finished yet. I think that's how we took it – one more match to go, and it's just business for me. We haven't won anything so far. The most important night is tomorrow. I think that's how we react, even though it was an amazing win, having so many opportunities and beating a really good team as Tennessee. I think it's just one more to go, and we haven't done anything so far. That's the mentality we have."

Baylor Senior Nick Stachowiak

On his confidence in his teammates to close out the match...

"I had 100 percent faith. That's why we've been putting in the hard work on and off the court this whole season, since we got to school in August. I didn't doubt for one second that either Mati or Adi was going to pull through, it was only a matter of who was going to pull through first. Tennessee put up a great fight there at the end. They didn't say die and they were fighting for every point. They were coming back a little bit, but we shut the door on them, and that's what you need to do to win."

Tennessee Head Coach Chris Woodruff

On his thoughts of the match and the season...

"I couldn't be prouder of our guys. They fought so hard all season. Honestly I thought Baylor, at a few spots, they outplayed us. We got overwhelmed in a couple of spots. And then you're looking at a guy in Johannus Monday who's a freshman, and their No. 2 [Matias Soto] is an [upperclassman]. There's a big, big spread there of experience. I think that definitely factored into it at position two.

But at the end of the day, there can only be one. At the start of the season, we had some pretty lofty goals and we really accomplished a lot and we put ourselves right where we wanted to be. We played for four hours today and yes, it's going to sting, but the most important thing is next year, everybody on the team will know exactly what it feels like. I always talk about experience, and we've got incredible experience...

Overall, I thought it was very good. Hats off to Baylor, but we'll try to learn from this one just like any other."

On his team's experience at the USTA National Campus...

"I think this is great to have it here. There's so much space, you have practice courts. The weather's been terrific, really. It's been fabulous. The hotels are closeby. You don't feel like you're on top of each other. I thought they did a great job spacing us out, great job with the practice courts. Everybody had ample time. So hats off to the USTA for hosting this event."

Tennessee Senior Adam Walton

On how his match unfolded at No. 1 singles...

"I started well, I got an early break and won the first. And then I was actually down 5-2 in the second, got it back to 5-all and then lost a deuce point at 6-5, set point. That set was pretty close. And then he got an early break in the third again and I was down 5-2. When it's a semifinal match you just keep on fighting and fighting and fighting, and never give up. I ended up getting a break at 5-3 and held at 5-5. Johannus at Court 2 could have gone either way. I really thought it came down to the wire and maybe they were just a little more experienced in the bigger moments. I don't know, it was tough, could have gone either way."

On whether he was aware of the match points Johannus Monday saved on Court 2...

"I knew that there was a match point because of the chanting, the countdown of the chanting. So I knew there was a match point. Trying to stay focused on my court was difficult, but I was doing that as best as I could, and my opponent was doing the same and we were just locked in. It really came down to a few points here or there, and it could have been us sitting in the winner's chair. So it is what it is."