



NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S TENNIS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP -- (2) TEXAS DEF. (5) PEPPERDINE, 4-3

Texas Head Coach Howard Joffe

On his thoughts on how the match unfolded...

"It is truly it's such a cliché, but the kids on the team know I'm never one to be speechless, but I'm a little bit speechless. You know, it's an interesting in terms of the poetic romance, you know, I think they had four super seniors on their team and we had four or five freshmen on our team. And so it really was fitting, I guess, youth against experience. And anyone that watched that match, I mean, the doubles point was an odyssey in of itself. We were I think I think, if I'm right, saved two match points at number one, doubles only then to win number one in three very quickly. And anyone that watched the match, I mean, there was just so little between the two teams and that our freshmen, who it came down to in the end in Peyton [Stearns] and Lulu [Sun] were able to come up with the goods is truly remarkable."

On how it feels to be crowned national champions...

"In a way, when Lulu [Sun] won the final point, it was a little bit of disbelief, elation and disbelief, because as your question suggests, you know, you can throw together six of the best players out there in the country and you just guaranteed nothing, you know? You know, certainly North Carolina were probably the favorite. They had a 48 match win streak going in to yesterday. And so you just never guaranteed anything. I just had a good sense that and again, this is not a scientific word, but the juju of this team was very good. And I felt like one way or the other, we'd get over the line today. But the idea that we'd actually get to the final with the obstacles and the difficulty and the inexperience, it really is a pretty remarkable dream, really."

Texas Freshman Peyton Stearns

On the team overcoming its inexperience to win the title...

"I mean, it's no shock, we're all good players and I think we all have the right mindset out on court. You know, we could be playing a sophomore, junior senior if you have a turn. And, you know, we have the same goal in mind. And I think that's what we had out there. I don't think any of us thought about who we were playing. We just focused on ourselves and brought what we could to the table today."

Texas Freshman Lulu Sun

On what was going through her mind in the third set...

“Honestly, at the end I was almost going to cramp. So I was just like survive the last few games and just throw everything I have. And I guess it worked.”

Pepperdine Head Coach Per Nilsson

On the run his team has had this season and over the past couple of years...

“It started with Ashley [Lahey] coming in to Pepperdine and changing the program, and it's been a wild ride and we knew that we could put together a team when you have people like Jess [Failla] and Ash. So we thought we were going to have a chance maybe a couple of years ago to reach the finals and we did, and this year maybe we didn't expect it until this week. But, yeah, it's bittersweet because this was the most fun week of the whole year for us. And come up a little short hurts at that.”

Pepperdine Senior Ashley Lahey

On her thoughts on this season and the team's run...

“This team was absolutely incredible. I've have so much love for every single person on this team. And just like everything that they've put in throughout the entire semester, they've all worked extremely hard and proved so much and just really bought into what it means to be a Wave. And I couldn't have asked for more from them. And it was just an incredible, incredible week. And we're really excited. I definitely think we had that much on our racquets and I'm extremely disappointed in myself. But overall, just so happy to have gotten the chance to be on this team was a really special experience.”

Pepperdine Graduate Student Jessica Failla

On being a part of this Pepperdine team...

“Yeah, I mean, going to Pepperdine was one of the best decisions I ever made in my life, obviously I played in a different school before and I just feel so thankful that I had the opportunity to play for the school. And honestly, I started this team tournament with the mindset of I've already won. If that means we lose the first round or we win the tournament, I've won as a person to be able to be a part of this program with these players and with these coaches. So I think having that mindset just gave me the opportunity to go out and do the best I could. And obviously we did really well in doubles this week, which gave us the opportunity to get to where we were tonight.”