



## **NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S TENNIS SEMIFINALS -- (2) TEXAS DEF. (6) NC STATE, 4-0**

### **Texas Head Coach Howard Joffe**

*On how his young team has handled the moment in a national semifinal...*

"I think success has sort of... if I can use the imagery of a heat-seeking missile. You need to have the intention and expect that you're going to do well, and then you have a way of finding the success. It's definitely a team that, from the outset, the intention has been to win. I think today, I would say I didn't see that malaise that I talked about in the last two rounds, once we got up. We won the first set in all six [singles] matches, and we really put our foot on the gas. The level of poise that these young people are bringing knocks my block off, because I'm an old guy, and I don't have as much poise as what they do."

*On the team's dominant wins in back-to-back matches...*

"One of the things, with all sports... there's a certain science to the coaching and the playing, right? You teach the techniques and the plays and so on and so forth. But there's an intangible element that our players bring. And I think anyone that watched them play—our players are very joyful. They play with a zest for the game and for life and are out there enjoying themselves. And I think there's probably a good amount of psychology science that would suggest that that would help with performance. But we have proved to be quite a dominant team over the course of the year."

### **Texas Freshman Peyton Stearns**

*On her mindset at No. 1 singles against Anna Rogers...*

"I just went out there trusting my game. I'm a big offensive player. I stayed on her. I think it was really tough for her to get into points, and I tried to stay on that the whole time and just not let her in. There was a little window in the second set, I think I had a little trip-up, was missing a couple, let her back in. But I bounced back pretty fast."

*On her favorite coaching analogy used by Coach Joffe...*

"I think the best analogy is, 'How would you talk to your six-year-old self?' When I'm getting mad out there, when I miss an easy forehand sitter. It's like, am I going to scream at that 6-year-old, or am I going to be nice to them."

### **NC State Head Coach Simon Earnshaw**

*On the season as a whole and the program's first-ever semifinal appearance ...*

"It's easy to get caught up in the moment. And in some ways the moment got the better of us today, I think. Obviously would have loved to have showed ourselves in a better light, but the reality is the other team does contribute to that, and that's the nature of our sport. But one day doesn't reflect a whole season, in fact this has been a combination of two seasons. It's been more than 500 days, maybe even more than 600 days since we started with this group in the fall of 2019, and I think we felt like we had this in us. Ultimately the hard part of our sport, and I think all sports in college, with this type of knockout tournament, it comes down to 24 or 48 hours, but it can't come down to that if you don't make the final 24 or 48 hours of the season. I told the girls after the match that we got almost to the last day here, and that in itself is a tremendous achievement. Our athletic director was asking me today, 'How many schools sponsor women's tennis,' and obviously it's a very prevalent sport. For us to be right there at the end, yeah it hurts right now, but upon reflection our student-athletes are really going to feel the gravitas of what we've done. Maybe we could have played somewhat better today, but overall, fantastic season."

*On the match vs. a strong Texas team...*

"I think we know that our doubles is very strong ... Reality is, I don't know that the doubles would have changed that much in the singles in today's match. Credit to Texas. They were loose. They were comfortable in this moment, and look, you just never know. Sometimes we're a tight team. I don't even think we were nervous, right, it's just kind of the occasion and the moment and all the craziness around you, which ... as you do well, one positive factor is people are in touch with you and people kind of congregate. For one reason or another it just didn't manifest itself as it should. The fact of the matter is we had that chance. I think we'll be better for it."

*On the experience of the NCAA Tournament at the USTA National Campus...*

"I'm a big proponent that I feel like the NCAAs should be at this location every year. I think it works and as a sport I don't understand why we move this around. We can have something that's a special place and all roads lead to this location. I think that would be important. ... COVID's not been the best period of time in our lives. A lot of people have lost their lives and we're really fortunate to have this. The fact that this team could get a second go to be here and be in the Round of 16 rather than be either on our own campus or somewhere else, that's a win in itself. I told them that no matter what ... these guys are winners, and we've become a winning program now in a place where nobody said we could affect any change. It was 45-50 years of 1-2 wins in the ACC every year. ... This was an amazing experience for these guys."

### **NC State Graduate Student Adriana Reami**

*On what it means to have helped lead the team to its first-ever semifinal...*

"It's incredible. Coming in with Anna, we had expectations that weren't this high. And to be here and make it throughout that long journey is amazing to me. I'm honestly so proud of what we've done. Every journey comes to an end eventually. I would have liked to take it all the way, but to come this far is actually amazing. ... We weren't expecting to make it this far when we started off as freshman, but as the years went on, we found out, 'OK, we can actually do this as a team.' We worked so hard to get what we think we deserve. It's just incredible the journey we went through, and where we are today is actually amazing. I'm hoping the team can take it home next year, but to be honest, this is incredible as it is. Really I'm so proud of this team and everything we went through is incredible to me."

