



2019 NCAA Championships May 16-25 • Orlando, Fla. • USTA National Campus

Women's final: Recap, All-Tournament Team, Quotes

#3 STANFORD def. #1 GEORGIA, 4-0

Orlando, Fla. – The Stanford Cardinal are NCAA women's champions for a record 20th time, after completing a businesslike run to the 2019 title at the USTA National Campus. Sunday's 4-0 final sweep was the most dominant performance by the now back-to-back champions at the finals site, made all the more impressive by its coming against the No. 1 team in the country in Georgia.

While the repeat winners avoided excessive celebrations on the way to the title match, there was no holding back as they brought the trophy back to the West Coast.

Two Stanford seniors—Caroline Lampl and Melissa Lord—put the Cardinal on the brink of glory with a pair of straight-sets singles wins, setting the stage for sophomore Janice Shin to clinch victory for the second time on the weekend. All three Stanford singles victories came via identical 6-2, 6-4 scorelines.

Stanford head coach Lele Forood, who won her 10th title in her 19 seasons at the helm, credited her seniors for setting the tone.

“These two especially [Lampl and Lord] came out so strong and so quick and really foraged big leads in their matches, and that made it more comfortable for all of us,” she detailed. “Having a lot of seniors is very helpful; they’ve been in these situations before and they pretty much know how to handle it. That’s a big part of the continued winning of our program.”

After the Cardinal took the doubles point with wins on Courts 2 and 3, Lampl was the first singles player off the court, giving her team a 2-0 lead with an efficient win on Court 3.

Lord eventually followed at No. 2, though the tournament's Most Outstanding Player had to recalibrate after Georgia's Marta Gonzalez erased four match points on the return at 5-2. After Gonzalez held to make it 5-4, Lord was able to settle down with the help of her teammates.

"Looking around the courts and seeing your teammates also winning definitely takes the pressure off," she explained. "Having the support of my teammates really calmed me down in the end."

With Stanford up a set on Courts 5 and 6, there seemed to be no way back for Georgia, despite leads at Nos. 1 and 4. In the end, it was Shin who sealed the deal, edging Georgia's Elena Christofi—the Bulldog's quarterfinal hero—in two tidy sets.

The Cardinal finalize their season at 28-1, adding the NCAA title to their Pac-12 regular season and tournament crowns. Their title-winning sweep avenged the only blemish on their season, an ITA Indoors semifinal loss to the Bulldogs.

The senior class leaves with three national titles in four years.

"It's such a large legacy to live up to, really. Coming into Stanford, I was very intimidated," Lampl reflected. "To add three more titles to the legacy, it just really means so much. I'm really proud of the work our class put in and our whole team. It's an unbelievable feeling."

ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

Singles:

- 1) Katarina Jokic (GEORGIA)
- 2) Melissa Lord (STANFORD)*
- 3) Sara Daavettila (NORTH CAROLINA)
- 4) Vivian Wolff (GEORGIA)
- 5) Janice Shin (STANFORD)
- 6) Meg Kowalksi (GEORGIA)

Doubles:

- 1) Katarina Jokic / Lourdes Carle (GEORGIA)
- 2) Emily Arbuthnott / Michaela Gordon (STANFORD)
- 3) Melissa Lord / Janice Shin (STANFORD)

Most Outstanding Player:

Melissa Lord (STANFORD)

QUOTES

Stanford senior Caroline Lampl

On what she'll miss most about collegiate tennis at Stanford:

The list goes on. There's so many amazing things that come with playing college tennis, let alone being on the Stanford's women's tennis team. The biggest thing I will miss personally is just having a family that really genuinely cares about you, not only on the court but off the court as well. These girls are just my best friends and it's been such an honor being able to play by them the last four years. Our coaches—our mentors—having guided us pretty much through life the past four years, it's been a really unbelievable experience. It's something I'll cherish forever. Collegiate tennis in general has just been the best years of my life. It's so much fun going out there and playing all these teams, having the opportunity to compete against the best players in the nation. The four years I will never forget.

On adding three more national titles in her time at Stanford:

It's just such a large legacy to live up to, really. Coming into Stanford, I was very intimidated... so many legends come out of this program like Nicole Gibbs, Hilary Barte, the Burdette sisters. It's really intimidating at first to live up to what they've set in stone for us. To add three more titles to the legacy, just really means so much. I'm really proud of the work that our class put in and our whole team. It's an unbelievable feeling.

On going from competing to supporting her teammates after her win:

It's definitely a lot of fun watching my teammates out there. It takes the stress off of me, getting off the court. You want to be the first off the court; you want to set the tone. But it's also extremely stressful watching your teammates, too. I have so much faith in all of them on the court but you always get really nervous. We're on the sidelines grabbing each other throughout the point and the nerves are just definitely going through our heads. It's so much fun watching my teammates competing out there and really amazing to be able to support them.

On playing at the USTA National Campus:

The facilities are unmatched. I think they're the best tennis facilities in the nation. It's just been an honor and a pleasure being able to play here. It was great.

On her message to incoming Stanford student-athletes:

I'm not going to lie, Stanford is hard, and there are going to be ups and downs. The downs just make you an even stronger person. My last four years at Stanford have transformed me and made me a better person. I don't regret anything. The school has been the best experience.

Stanford senior Melissa Lord

On regrouping after failing to convert a 40-love lead when serving for the match:

It's a little tough, definitely, looking back at that. Looking around the courts and seeing your teammates also winning definitely takes the pressure off. Having the support of my teammates really calmed me down in the end.

On what she'll miss most about collegiate tennis at Stanford:

Definitely the people, having teammates that support you on and off the court. Also, the coaches that care about you, not only as tennis players, but as people. The support system we've had throughout our entire college career... there's nothing like it.

On playing at the USTA National Campus:

First day on the practice court, we came on and we were like, 'Oh we love these courts.' Just the atmosphere, everything about it was just great. We loved it.

On her message to incoming Stanford student-athletes:

Going to Stanford, it's a dream come true. Obviously, this is where we wanted to go from the start. Just playing here for four years has been unmatched. To all the student-athletes out there, it's not easy. There's going to be bumps in the road. It's the best experience of your life. Looking back at it, I wouldn't regret anything.

Stanford Head Coach Lele Forood

On whether she had any doubts her team would get the win:

Well, yes, there's always a doubt. But it's not a big doubt. We're really happy to win the doubles point. The conditions were really rough with the wind and stuff; it wasn't the most artistic doubles. These two especially [Caroline Lampl and Melissa Lord] came out so strong and so quick and really foraged big leads in their matches, and that made it more comfortable for all of us. And then we were winning some other matches as well. It's just a great effort on the part of the whole team and especially these two, who set the tone right from the start of the singles.

On the advantage of having a veteran team:

Well, we did use our freshmen a lot this season, and even one of them played in the win yesterday. They were a part of this, both of them. But obviously having a lot of seniors is very helpful; they've been in these situations before and they pretty much know how to handle it. That's a big part of the continued winning of our program.

Stanford Head Coach Lele Forood (continued)

On having a relatively straightforward path to the title:

I don't know if I'd say if any of our matches were in any way routine. I think there were ups and downs to all of them. There were a lot of great teams here. We're just happy to get by all of them.

On playing at the USTA National Campus:

We had the opportunity to play a College MatchDay here a couple years ago, and we just loved it. The atmosphere there, the situation with the courts was just amazing. When we found out they were going to be hosting the National Championships, I think we were very excited to come here and play in Orlando at the USTA's home. I'm one who would like to see a permanent home for this tournament. I'm hoping it's here someday permanently.

On what she'll miss most about the seniors:

They're a fun group. They just have a really good time with each other... sometimes too good of a time, during practice when we have to tone them down. When you're going to see people for nine months a year almost daily, it's better to have them having a good time and enjoy being there and making practice and competitions fun. That will be what I miss.

Georgia Head Coach Jeff Wallace

On whether the loss came from Stanford's strength or Georgia not playing their A-game:

Stanford played a great match, clearly. You have to congratulate them, take your hats off to them. I thought they really did play a great match. I thought we had moments in several of our matches where we looked like we were surging ahead and having an opportunity, then we just didn't quite sustain that. You've got to credit them for a lot of that. They clearly were the better team tonight. Super proud of our guys, though. I really feel like it's been a special year for us, we wanted this last one really bad but unfortunately, not able to get it. Like I said, a lot of that had to do with Stanford.

On how the length of the last two matches affected their match tonight:

I really feel like our guys are fit and strong and are able to get ready to go today. Sometimes, it's the mental battle of playing those tight matches like that and having late nights. I don't really like to think of it in that way. Those are pretty much, in my mind, excuses. I just want to give credit to Stanford. I know my team came to play and they played hard and gave it everything they had, we just didn't quite have enough today.

Georgia Head Coach Jeff Wallace (continued)

On the momentum swings during the match:

In the doubles point, we had won at No. 1, and played great. We had opportunities, we had one game where we were up 40-love on Court 3 to build a lead and we ended up losing that game. That would have been a nice opportunity there. And then Court 2, doubles, when they broke back and tied it up, we didn't hold that next game. That was another opportunity. That was a great break.

And looking at some of the singles matches, at the point where I think it was Meg [Kowalski] who had just about tied it up to start the tiebreaker and Vivian [Wolff] had won her set and Kat [Katarina Jokic] had won her set and Christofi [Elena] was in the middle part of her second set, it was like 3-all, that would've been a nice opportunity for us to get some things going. Again, credit Stanford, we were unable to do that.

On any surprises with the individual match results:

I felt like the doubles point would be close and it was. Playing in a national championship final, they should all be great matches. I think that as coaches you look for ways you can win on each court and certain things you can do and that can happen. At the same time, they're obviously trying to do the same thing. I don't think anyone ever gets to the national championship match and goes, 'Oh, clearly we can win this spot, or they're better than us here.' I just feel like you've got to go play the match and bring it, see how it plays out.

On playing a team with such a winning tradition in Stanford:

You just keep working and keep recruiting and keep training. You have to learn from the experience of being here and look forward to next year. Try to get into another final championship match and get a 'W.' Now our record is 2-2 against them in the finals of the NCAAs. They've won 20 in their program and have had a lot of huge success. What they've done is amazing and you've got to give them hats off to that. At the same time, I can't really control that. I can only control what we're trying to do.

Obviously, we've had quite a bit of good success throughout the years. This team now has played in the finals of the NCAAs over four different decades. We're looking forward to next year already. I think that we've got a great shot at being right back in this thing, as do they always, of course. A lot of work needs to happen between now and then, I think that this has been a huge year in our program and a huge step in the right direction. I really feel like we're going to hurt bad tonight but at some point in time here real soon we're going to realize it's been a hell of a year and the future is really bright.