



# 2017 SEC Women's Tennis Notebook

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Final

## Alabama

The Crimson Tide finished the year with an 8-16 overall record boasting 54 wins in singles play in the dual-match season and 32 doubles victories. Senior Erin Routliffe and freshman Maddie Pothoff concluded the season with an impressive No. 2 national ranking in doubles play. The Duo fell short in the national championship match of the 2017 NCAA doubles bracket in a contest decided in a third-set tiebreaker.

## Arkansas

Led by ITA Central Region Coach of the Year Michael Hegarty, the No. 19 Razorbacks (18-10, 7-6 SEC) earned the program's 15th all-time NCAA Championship bid this season, including its third straight for the first time since 2010-12. Arkansas beat Wichita State 4-2 in the first round for the program's first win in the NCAA Championship since 2011. The 18 wins were the school's most since 2011. Three Razorbacks participated in the NCAA individual championships. Arkansas' duo of senior co-captain Shannon Hudson and freshman Giulia Pairone advanced to the round of 16 in the doubles bracket. Hudson also made it to the round of 32 in singles, while sophomore Ana Oparenovic competed in first-round singles action. The 2017 NCAA singles and doubles championships marked the individual NCAA debuts for Hudson, Pairone and Oparenovic.

## Auburn

The Auburn women's wrapped up the 2016-17 season with a program record 25 wins and its second-straight trip to the NCAA Round of 16. Junior Alizee Michaud led the way with a single season program record 58 combined wins in singles and doubles. The Florida native also tied the Auburn single season record with 33 singles victories. Freshman Taylor Russo led the team with 29 doubles victories, tying a single season program record for a single season. The Tigers finished the season ranked No. 14 in the final Oracle/ITA polls and have now been ranked inside the top-15 since March 8, 2016.

## Florida

Florida won its seventh NCAA Team Title in program history (1992, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2011, 2012 & 2017) - second most NCAA Team Championships in the nation. The Gators ranked No. 1 in the final national ITA poll - went wire-to-wire - preseason to final - as the No. 1-ranked team in the country - 17 consecutive weeks. UF advanced to the NCAA Finals for the 14th time in program history and first since 2012 and to the NCAA semifinals for the 25th time in the last 31 years. Florida won the ITA National Team Indoor Championships for the seventh time in program history (1987-88, 1990-91, 1991-92, 1995-96, 1996-97, 1998-99, 2016-17) with the previous last title coming in 1998-99 and since that year, Florida has competed in the event just five times. Florida awarded No. 1 overall seed in the NCAA Championships for 14th time. UF advanced to the SEC Tournament final for the 26th time in the 30-year history of the event. Belinda Woolcock became the first Gator to reach the NCAA Singles Final since 2002 and the first to reach the semifinals since 2015. A total of six Gator appeared in the final ITA National Singles Rankings along with three pairings in the National Doubles Rankings.

## Georgia

The sixth-ranked Georgia Bulldogs (19-6, 11-2 SEC) reached the Round of 16 in their 31st consecutive NCAA Championships appearance. Georgia defeated South Carolina State and North Carolina State prior to falling to No. 12 Pepperdine, 4-3. In the Singles Championships, junior Ellen Perez, ranked 16th in ITA Singles, advanced to the Sweet Sixteen en route to picking up All-America honors, while Elena Christofi and Kennedy Shaffer lost in the first round. Christofi received ITA Southeast Regional Rookie of the Year prior to the tournament. In the Doubles Championships, Shaffer and Christofi defeated two sets of opponents to move on to the Elite Eight, which garnered All-America honors. Perez and Caroline Brinson also picked up All-America in doubles due to their seed, however they got upset in the Round of 32.

## Kentucky

The Kentucky women's tennis team ended its 2017 campaign with a 17-9 (7-6 Southeastern Conference) overall record, advancing to the second round of the NCAA Championship before falling to 10th-ranked Michigan, 4-2. The Wildcats enjoyed one of their most successful seasons in recent years, ending the regular season with its first winning conference record since 2007 and ending the year at No. 18 in the final ITA Rankings. Two individuals and two doubles teams also ended the season ranked by the ITA. Senior Aldila Sutjiadi closed her college career ranked 25th in the nation, while sophomore Akvilė Paražinskaitė finished at No. 94. Paražinskaitė and senior Morgan Chumney also ended the season ranked 76th in doubles. Ranked No. 4 in the nation, Sutjiadi and junior Mami Adachi earned the No. 3 overall seed in the NCAA Doubles Tournament, advancing to the Elite Eight for the second consecutive year to become the first Kentucky duo to earn All-America honors in back-to-back seasons since Carolina Mayorga and Sarah Witten accomplished the feat in 2001 and 2002.

## LSU

The Tigers ended their season with a 15-11 record. LSU women's tennis freshman Jade Lewis was named both Rookie of the Year and Player to Watch while senior Skylar Holloway was named Most Improved Player in the Southern Region by the ITA. Senior Joana Valle Costa's storied LSU career came to an end as she and partner Ryann Foster fell in the semifinal round of the NCAA Division I Women's Doubles Championships. Valle Costa and Foster finished the season with a 15-11 doubles record, including two top-ten wins on court one in the dual season and another top-ten win in the postseason. Foster finished the season as the team leader in both overall singles and doubles victories with 27 and 19, respectively. Valle Costa's distinguished career in the Purple and Gold has seen her accumulate a team-leading 80 career singles wins and 55 career doubles wins.

## **Ole Miss**

Ole Miss (15-14) earned its ninth straight NCAA bid and advanced to the second round. Junior Arianne Hartono ended the year ranked No. 32 in singles and finished with a 20-15 overall record and her second straight NCAA singles and doubles appearance with freshman Alexa Bortles. The duo ended the year ranked No. 25. Hartono also earned All-SEC First Team honors. Junior Natalie Suk concluded the year ranked No. 59 in singles. Freshman Anna Vrbenska had a solid debut, finishing with an 18-9 overall record, 8-1 in the SEC. Off the court, the Rebels posted a cumulative GPA of 3.34 and eight student-athletes made the honor roll. The Rebels will return five of their top six from this year in 2018, including Hartono, Suk, Vrbenska and Bortles.

## **Mississippi State**

Making its third consecutive NCAA appearance, the Mississippi State women's tennis team finished the 2016-17 season with a 15-9 record. The Bulldogs finished the year ranked 20th in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's national rankings tying the program's best ITA finish. The Bulldogs also finished 7-6 in the powerful Southeastern Conference (tying the program best) and reached the quarterfinals of the SEC Championship for the third year in a row. Of State's 15 wins, eight came against ranked opponents, five in the top 25 and three in the top 50. Eight of State's nine setbacks during the campaign were to teams in the final top 20. Individually, MSU saw its second singles ITA All-American named as senior Jasmine Lee earned the No. 7 seed in the 2017 NCAA Singles Championship. State also earned ITA All-American honors in doubles as Lee and Lisa Marie Rioux were selected as the No. 2 seed for the 2017 NCAA Doubles Championship.

## **Missouri**

Mizzou's top doubles duo, Bea Machado Santos and Amina Ismail, highlighted the campaign by clinching a spot in the NCAA Doubles Tournament, the first Tiger pairing to do so since 2003. The twosome was ranked as high as No. 10 in the nation before finishing the season ranked No. 20 in the final doubles poll. Despite a first round loss at the NCAA Tournament, Santos and Ismail finished with seven wins over ranked pairings during the campaign, including a pair over Top-10 opponents. As a team, Mizzou capped the regular season with another ranked victory, downing No. 33 Alabama behind freshman Mackenzy Middlebrooks' third match-clinching point of the campaign. Middlebrooks and fellow freshman Tate Schroeder racked up a combined 53 wins in impressive first seasons for Mizzou. Schroeder led the team with 17 total singles victories, collecting five during SEC play. Schroeder worked her way up to the No. 2 spot in the singles lineup by the end of the season after going 13-3 at the No. 3 and No. 4 singles positions combined.

## **South Carolina**

The Gamecocks finished the season ranked No. 15, the team's highest final ranking since the 1998-99 team finished ranked No. 12. South Carolina finished with a 20-9 overall record, advancing to the Round of 16 in this year's NCAA Team Championships for the first time since 2009. The Gamecocks defeated North Florida and No. 22 Texas before falling to No 2 Ohio State, 4-1. Freshman Mia Horvit (46) advance to the Round of 16 in the NCAA Singles Championships, becoming the first freshman and second Gamecock to earn All-America honors. Ingrid Gamarra Martins (48), a sophomore, fell in the Second Round in the NCAA Singles and the doubles team of Hadley Berg and Paige Cline (27) fell in the Second Round of the NCAA Doubles Championships.

## **Tennessee**

The Tennessee women's tennis team took a huge step during Alison Ojeda's first year as head coach on Rocky Top. The Vols (19-12) finished in the Top 25 of the ITA's final rankings for the first time since 2012, coming in at 24th. She led UT to its first NCAA Tournament appearance since 2014, advancing to the second round. Senior Brittany Lindl put together her strongest season as a Vol, earning a bid to the NCAA Singles Championships. The All-SEC second team honoree also received the ITA Ohio Valley Region's Most improved Senior Award. Improved on-court performance wasn't the only bright spot for Tennessee women's tennis this season, as Ojeda also emphasized community outreach in the Knoxville area, which earned Tennessee a share of its first-ever national ITA Community Service Award.

## **Texas A&M**

Texas A&M (18-13, 6-7 SEC) made its 18th consecutive appearance in the NCAA Championship and was the only unseeded team to reach the round of 16 after upsetting No. 16 Baylor, 4-3, in Waco in the second round. The Aggies advanced to the round of 16 for the fourth time in five years and the fifth time overall before falling to No. 1 seed and eventual national champion Florida. Seniors Rachel Pierson and Rutuja Bhosale became A&M's first All-Americans in doubles after receiving a No. 5-8 seed in the 32-team NCAA Doubles Championship. They were only the third A&M doubles team in program history to reach the round of 16, and they finished No. 7 in the final ITA rankings, the highest final ranking in school history. Pierson and Bhosale also were selected to play in the NCAA Singles Championship. Pierson became the first Aggie to earn All-America honors in both doubles and singles, as she received a No. 9-16 seed. Although both players were eliminated in the first round, they each set career highs for final singles rankings, with Pierson finishing No. 23 and Bhosale receiving a No. 60 final ranking. The Aggies were No. 16 in the final team rankings, marking the sixth consecutive year the Aggies have finished ranked in the top 20. Mark Weaver, who just completed his second season as head coach of the Aggies, loses five seniors overall, but his incoming recruiting class is ranked an all-time high No. 7 by Tennis Recruiting Network.

## **Vanderbilt**

An historic season for Vanderbilt women's tennis came to a close on May 22 as the third-ranked/fourth-seeded Commodores fell 4-2 to top-ranked/seeded Florida in the Final Four of the 2017 NCAA Women's Tennis Tournament. Seniors Sydney Campbell and Georgina Sellyn led the Dores through what is considered the toughest schedule in collegiate tennis (SLAM.tennis.com) en route to a 24-6 overall record. The Final Four defeat was VU's first loss since March 18, a span of more than two months. Campbell's collegiate tennis career came to a close Sunday afternoon as the three-time All-American fell in three hard-fought sets to Michigan's Brienne Minor in the NCAA Singles Semifinals. Four Commodores concluded in the ITA rankings, Sharma career-high No. 2, Campbell career-high No. 7, Rosca No. 85, Contreras No. 108. Sharma and Smith concluded the season ranked No. 6.