



Stephen F. Austin Athletics Media Relations

P.O. Box 13010, SFA Station • Nacogdoches, Texas 75962-3010 • (936) 468-2606 • Fax (936) 468-4593

SFA Faces #25 Tulsa in NCAAs

SFA women land three seed in Waco's four-team pod

The No. 46th-ranked Stephen F. Austin women's tennis will face No. 25 Tulsa Friday, May 11th in the opening round of the NCAA Championships. The match is slated to begin at 11 a.m. from the Hurd Tennis Center in Waco, Texas. The 'Jacks enter NCAA Championships with a 23-4 overall record. SFA has won seven of its last eight matches, including three straight, coming into the tournament. The other two teams in the four-team pod are Oral Roberts and No. 12 national seed Baylor. The Baylor/ORU matchup is slated to begin at 2 p.m. Friday.

Scouting the Opposition

No. 25 Tulsa is 22-3 overall, and enters the NCAA Championships as one of the nation's hottest teams having won 12-straight matches. Baylor is 23-7 on the season and enters the weekend having won four of its last five matches, but is coming off a 4-3 setback to Texas A&M in the Big 12 Championships. Oral Roberts is 13-5 overall and has won 10 consecutive entering postseason play.

SFA vs. the Field

SFA is 1-2 (.333) against the NCAA's field of 64 teams. The 'Jacks dropped matches to Illinois and Baylor, while picking up a 7-0 win over North Texas earlier this season.

Another First

The 46th-ranked Stephen F. Austin women's tennis team is making its first appearance in the NCAA Championships in program history.

SLC Title Comes to Nacogdoches

The Stephen F. Austin women's tennis team recorded its first Southland Conference title in program history this past season. The No. 46-ranked team in the country went 23-4 (.852) record on the season and posted a 10-1 (.909) record in conference play.

Record-Setting Pace

The 'Jacks set a new school record for wins in a season when they defeated UTSA in the opening round of the conference tournament for their 21st victory of the year. SFA enters the NCAA Championships with 23 wins which ranks tied for fourth in the country. SFA currently ranks behinds No. 3 Duke (25), No. 60 College of Charleston (25), Akron (245) and is tied with No. 23 Nebraska (23). SFA also set a program record for winning percentage in 2012 (23-4/.852).

2012 SFA Tennis Schedule

Date	Opponent	Score
Jan. 12	@Florida Atlantic	W 6-1
Jan. 13	vs. Illinois	L 5-2
Jan. 21	vs. Louisville	W 5-2
Jan. 25	@ No. 5 Baylor	L 5-1
Jan. 28	@North Texas	W 7-0
Jan. 29	vs. Colorado	W 6-1
Feb. 11	@Arkansas-Little Rock	W 7-0
Feb. 19	@Mississippi State	W 4-3
Mar. 2	@No. 59 Tulane	W 5-2
Mar. 3	@Southeastern Louisiana*	W 7-0
Mar. 4	@Nicholls*	W 6-1
Mar. 4	@Louisiana-Lafayette	W 5-1
Mar. 13	vs. Iowa State	W 5-2
Mar. 21	Lamar*	W 6-1
Mar. 23	@Northwestern State*	W 6-1
Mar. 24	Sam Houston State*	W 6-1
Mar. 28	McNeese State*	W 7-0
Mar. 30	No. 68 Missouri	L 4-3
Apr. 1	@Louisiana Tech	W 7-0
Apr. 5	Texas A&M-Corpus Christi*	W 6-1
Apr. 7	UTSA*	W 6-1
Apr. 13	@Texas State*	W 6-0
Apr. 15	@Texas-Arlington*	L 4-0
Apr. 26	UTSA~	W 4-0
Apr. 27	Texas A&M-Corpus Christi~	W 4-1
Apr. 28	Texas-Arlington~	W 4-0
May 11	vs. Tulsa!	11 a.m.

Bold indicates home matches

*Indicates SLC matches

~Indicates SLC Tournament

!Indicates NCAA Championships

Pronunciation Guide

Tereza Bekerova (ter-uh-zuh beck-er-ovuh)

Malena Gordo (muh-lay-nuh gor-doe)

Jithme Jayawickrema (jith-me jay-uh-wik-ray-muh)

Antonia Kolovou (ann-tuh-nee-uh koe-loe-voo)

Elena Kordolaimi (ell-uh-nuh kor-doe-lay-me)

Alina Shazhko (shazz-koe)

Conference Record-Setting Pace

The 'Jacks also set a new record for conference wins in a season. SFA finished the year 10 wins, winning the first 10 matches of the year before dropping their only loss of the season in the regular-season finale.

20-Win Season2

After never having recorded a 20-win season in program history, SFA has now won 20 matches in each of the past two seasons.

Streaking

In addition to the other records SFA broke during the 2012 campaign, the 'Jacks also recorded a program-best 14-match win streak.

National Respect

Stephen F. Austin cracked the ITA Top 75 poll during the 2011 season. SFA took that a step further in 2012 moving up to No. 35 nationally on March 7th. SFA enters the NCAA Championships as the nation's 46th-ranked team.

Wins Over Ranked Opponents

SFA defeated No. 59 Tulane earlier this season for its only national-ranked win, but SFA has recorded wins over North Texas and Mississippi State who later moved into the national rankings.

Total Makeover

Almost overnight head coach Patrick Sullivan transitioned the Stephen F. Austin women's tennis team from one competing to qualify for the conference tournament to one winning conference championships. In his first season SFA set a school record for wins (20), winning percentage (20-5/.800), winning streak (9) and win streak to start a season (9). The 2011 season also marked the first year SFA had an individual ranked nationally, as well as the team receiving a national ranking (71). SFA improved upon those numbers this season by winning 23 matches, recording an .852 winning percentage, a winning 14-straight matches and was ranked as high as 35th at one point during the season.

Doubles Trouble

SFA has made a habit of starting strong during the 2012 season. The 'Jacks have not lost the doubles point in their last 25 matches, a streak that goes back to their setback at No. 69 Illinois in the second match of the season. In fact, the Illini are the only team to win the doubles point against SFA in 2012. In three of the matches there was no doubles played. SFA has swept all three doubles matches 11 times this season.

A Closer Look at the 2s

Senior Alina Shazhko and Jithmie Jayawickrema jumped out to a great start in doubles play this season. The duo won their first seven matches of the spring season, including two wins over top-30 teams. The tandem cracked the national rankings at No. 17, the highest ranking for a doubles team in school and Southland Conference history.

Youthful Exuberance

SFA is one of the youngest teams in the nation. The 'Jacks 2012 roster consists of one senior, two juniors one sophomore and four freshmen.

The Defense Doesn't Rest

SFA has held its opponents to one point or less 18 time this season, including eight shutouts, 2012.

20-Somethings

SFA had five players finish the year with at least 20 singles wins. Freshman Malena Gordo posted a 28-6 (.824) mark, while senior Alina Shazhko went 24-8 (.750). Freshmen Tereza Bekerova and Elena Kordolaimi and junior Antonia Kolovou each recorded 23 wins on the season.

Coach/Player Bios



Patrick Sullivan
Head Coach
43-9 (.823)/Second Season
2012 SLC Coach of the Year

After a 2010-11 season that saw SFA compile a mountain of program firsts, it would seem nearly impossible for the 'Jacks to equal those numbers in the second season under head coach Patrick Sullivan, but somebody forgot to mention that to Sullivan and his youthful players. SFA capped off its first-ever Southland Conference regular-season title, by racing their way through the conference tournament crushing everyone in their path. The 'Jacks won the tournament title, surrendering only one point in the three matches, on their way to their first-ever berth in the NCAA Championships.

SFA finished the regular season tied for fourth nationally with 23 wins, setting a new program record for victories. That led to another program first as the 'Jacks posted their second-consecutive 20-win season. The 23-4 (.852) mark also set a new program record for winning percentage. Along the way, SFA rattled off a program-best 14-match win streak and had six players earn All-Southland Conference honors (two singles and four doubles players), including four first-team selections. In addition to his players, Sullivan was honored by the league earning SLC Coach of the Year honors.

The 'Jacks' also posted their first win over a nationally-ranked team, topping No. 59 Tulane, 5-2, in March. Although SFA finished the regular season with a 1-3 record over nationally ranked teams, SFA had two wins over programs that would later land in the ITA poll.

Sullivan also raised the level of competition for the 'Jacks in his second season and his youthful squad responded to the challenge. The 2012 campaign saw SFA notch wins over schools from the Big East, Big 12, Conference USA, Pac 12, SEC and Sun Belt.

SFA's production against top-tier teams did not go unnoticed by the voters, as SFA landed in the national rankings for a second consecutive season. The 'Jacks climbed as high as No. 35, before closing out the regular season ranked 46th. In addition to the team ranking, the doubles team of senior Alina Shazhko and junior Jithmie Jayawickrema were ranked as high as No. 17 in the nation. The ranking came following the tandem's wins over two top-30 teams, and was the highest rank for a doubles team in the history of the Southland.

The successful 2012 campaign came on the heels of a record-setting 2011 year that saw SFA's rookie head coach rewrite nearly every record in the book. Sullivan wasted no time following his hiring on Sept. 1, 2010, going 20-5 in his inaugural campaign and shattering the record for both wins and winning percentage. His rookie season saw SFA earn its first ever team national ranking, first top-10 regional finish, first nationally-ranked player, and highest individual regional ranking ever. The 'Jacks had not only their highest Southland Conference finish in over a decade, but also beat three conference rivals (Sam Houston, Southeastern Louisiana, and Texas State) for the first time since the 1990s. The 'Jacks were successful in the classroom as well, earning their second consecutive ITA All-Academic team honors for GPAs of 3.5 or higher.

Sullivan capitalized on the momentum of the 'Jacks great season and lived up to his reputation as one of the nation's best recruiters by signing the #1 ranked recruiting class of 2011 among mid-major programs and the #23 overall class in the NCAA, marking the first time that a Southland Conference recruiting class had been ranked among the nation's top 25.

Sullivan came to SFA from the University of Arkansas, where he spent two separate tours, most recently in 2009-10. Sullivan returned to Fayetteville in June of 2009 and despite getting a late start on recruiting, signed the #17-ranked recruiting class in the country. Led by these strong newcomers, the Razorbacks were able to overcome the loss of the top three players from the previous year's top-10 team and finished with 18 wins, ranked No. 22 in the nation and advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament. That season the Razorbacks had wins over No. 22 Ole Miss, No. 23 Washington, No. 27 TCU, No. 32 Tulsa and No. 35 Oklahoma.

Sullivan had previously served as a graduate assistant coach with head coach Michael Hegarty and the Razorbacks from 2004-06, while completing a law degree, before taking over as the full-time assistant coach during the 2006-07 season. During his tenure at Arkansas, four of Sullivan's players achieved national rankings, including two players in the national top-25. In 2007, Sullivan's final season, the Razorbacks fielded the ITA Central Region's top-ranked singles player

and two of the region's top-five doubles teams. While at Arkansas, Sullivan coached the Razorback's most decorated women's tennis player ever, Aurelija Miseviciute, who won an astounding 126 singles matches in her career, earned two All-America and three All-SEC honors, was a two-time ITA National Indoor Champion, and was the nation's #1-ranked player in back to back years.

During his second stop at Arkansas Sullivan coached Anouk Tigu, who was voted the ITA Central Region Player to Watch in spring 2010, validating the honor by winning the ITA Central Region championship in fall 2010. Also in 2010, Sullivan recruits Kelsey Sundaram and Claudine Paulson were named the ITA Rookie Player of the Year and formed part of a doubles team ranked as high as #18 in the country, respectively. Tigu, who was ranked No. 29 in the nation in singles, was a first-team All-SEC while Sundaram made the all-SEC freshman team.

Before his latest season at Arkansas, Sullivan spent two seasons in Dallas serving as assistant women's coach at SMU under current Auburn head coach Lauren Longbotham-Meisner. Sullivan helped guide the Mustangs to an all-time best 28-3 record in 2008-09 and their first top-25 finish in 20 years. In his two years at SMU, three of Sullivan's recruits garnered national rankings in singles and four different doubles pairs appeared in the top-50 including Marta Lesniak, the ITA Southwest Rookie of the Year and Conference USA Freshman of the Year. Lesniak reached as high as #39 in the nation in singles and #19 in doubles during her freshman season and would reach as high as #2 nationally in singles and become an All-American during her SMU career.

Sullivan's SMU teams dominated on the court as well as in the classroom, earning nine all-conference athletic and academic awards, conference newcomer of the year, freshman of the year, and player of the year awards, and earning the highest GPA of any team on campus in back-to-back years. Sullivan began his college coaching career as a volunteer assistant coach for the men's tennis team at his alma mater, Texas A&M. His coaching responsibilities at Texas A&M included working with the strength and conditioning coaches and supervising the team's summer conditioning program.

Sullivan and his wife Caroline, who works as the campus dietitian at SFA, have been married for four years.



Tereza Bekerova
Freshman
Prague, Czech Republic

2011-12 (Freshman): One of four freshmen in the starting lineup ... Played Nos. 1-3 singles, and No. 1 doubles (with partner Malena Gordo) ... One of five players with at least 20 singles wins on the season ... Finished the year with a 23-10 (.697) overall record ... Went 13-8 (.619) during the spring season ... Recorded a 7-4 (.636) mark at No. 1 singles, and 5-2 (.714) at No. 3 ... Was a dominant 31-5 (.861) in doubles, including 16-4 (.800) at the No. 1 spot.

High School: Came to SFA with an ITF junior ranking of 110 and a Women's Tennis Association ranking of 941... Finalist in the 20th annual Czech junior national championships... Finalist in the Ex Pilsen Wilson Cup beating world #2-ranked junior and current top-200 pro... Reached the semifinals in the 2009 Rebecq Open, posting a win over the #3-ranked American in 2010.

Personal: Daughter of Martin Bekera and Ilona Bekerova... Has one brother, Martin... Majoring in Kinesiology.



Malena Gordo
Freshman
Buenos Aires, Argentina

2011-12 (Freshman): First-team All-Southland Conference ... One of four freshmen in the starting lineup ... Played Nos. 4-6 singles, and at No. 1 doubles (with partner Tereza Bekerova) ... One of five players with at least 20 singles wins ... Finished the year with a 28-6 (.824) overall record ... Was 18-5 (.783) during the spring season ... Posted a 5-1 record at No. 5 spot, and a 7-2 record at No. 6 singles ... Was a dominant 31-5 (.861) in doubles, including 16-4 (.800) at the No. 1 spot.

High School: Was ranked #34 in the ITF junior rankings ... Was the highest-ranked player in South America ... Competed in the 2007 Wimbledon Junior Championships where she had a doubles win over current top-100 pro ... Competed in the junior events at the US Open and French Open ... Competed in her first junior championship in 2006 at the 2nd Annual Buenos Aires Cup defeating two top-30 junior players on her way to victory ... Was either a winner or finalist in six consecutive world-class junior doubles events in five different countries.

Personal: Daughter of Cynthia Paganini and the late Fernando Gordo... Has one sister, Paloma... Majoring in Theater.



Jithmie Jayawickrema
Junior
Colombo, Sri Lanka

2011-12 (Junior): A first-team All-Southland Conference selection in doubles play ... Played at the Nos. 2-6 singles positions and the No. 2 doubles spot (with Alina Shazhko) ... Doubles team was ranked as high as 17th nationally ... Recorded a 20-3 (.870) mark at No. 2 doubles, a record which included wins over two top-30 teams ... Doubles team was a perfect 10-0 during conference play ... Went 4-3 at No. 2 singles, and 5-0 at No. 4 singles.

2011: Joined the team in January, but did not compete in the spring ... Advanced to the singles final of the ITA Cincinnati summer event ... Was the runner-up at the Purdue summer tournament.

High School: One of the top junior players in the world ... Notched 73 victories at the international level ... Represented her country in Federation Cup play at age 17.

Personal: Daughter of Hirantha and Ragie Jayawickrema ... Majoring in business and would like to pursue a professional tennis career after graduation.



Antonia Kolovou
Junior
Larisa, Greece

2011-12 (Junior): A first-team All-Southland Conference selection ... Played Nos. 3-6 singles, going 13-0 at the No. 5 spot, and 5-1 (.833) at six singles ... Posted a near flawless 23-3 (.885) singles record ... Was 7-2 (.778) in doubles play, including a 5-2 mark at No. 3 doubles (with partner Elena Kordolaimi) ... Was named SLC Player of the Week (Feb. 21) for her efforts in helping SFA defeat Mississippi State.

Tyler JC (2010-11): Guided TJC to back-to-back NJCAA Championships ... A two-time first-team NJCAA All-America selection ... Teamed with Texas A&M letterwinner, Sun Wen, to take the 2010 NJCAA doubles title ... Duo finished second in the country in 2011 ... Ranked as high as No. 3 in the nation in singles, and No. 1 in doubles play during her sophomore season ... The rankings come following a freshman campaign that saw here earn a No. 6 national ranking in singles and fourth in doubles.

High School: One of the top players in Greece, was a three-time quarterfinalist at Greece's ITF Corfu Open ... As a junior player, teamed with current top-200 WTA professional Eirini Georgatou to represent Greece in the 2007 European Junior Championships.

Personal: Daughter of Spiros and Galini Kolovou ... Is majoring in kinesiology.



Elena Kordolaimi
Freshman
Lamia, Greece

2011-12 (Freshman): One of the top freshmen in the league ... Garnered second-team All-Southland Conference honors in doubles play (with partner Laura Servise) ... Two-time SLC Player of the Week ... Played Nos. 1-3 singles ... One of four freshmen in the starting lineup ... One of five players with at least 20 singles wins ... Recorded a 23-8 (.742) record in singles, including a 17-6 (.739) mark during the spring season ... Posted a 9-4 (.692) mark at No. 1 singles ... Posted a 13-2 (.867) mark at No. 3 doubles ... The duo of Kordolaimi and Servise have won eight of their last 10 matches heading into the NCAA Championships.

High School: Was the #1 junior player in Greece ... Competed in her first professional tournament at the age of 14 ... Her first professional victory against a top-400 WTA player at the age of 15 ... Won the Greek U-18 Championships in 2011 ... Had a victory over a top-100 junior player at the 2011 European Junior Championships.

Personal: Is the daughter of Konstantinos and Vasiliki-Marina Kordolaimi ... Has one brother, Vaggelis ... Majoring in Kinesiology and Health Sciences ... Would like to play professional tennis after graduation.



Julia Lorca
Freshman
Lyon, France

2011-12 (Freshman): One of four freshmen in the starting lineup ... Played Nos. 5-6 singles ... Recorded an 18-6 (.750) overall record, including a 13-2 (.867) record during the spring ... Posted a near perfect mark at No. 6 singles (13-1) ... Was 5-3 (.625) in doubles play.

High School: Was listed as high as the 14th open-ranked player in France ... Had her first professional win at age 16 in the 2010 Lyon Open against a top-700 pro.

Personal: Daughter of Pierre and Coralie Lorca ... Has two sisters, Audrey and Agathe, and one brother Bastien ... Major is currently undecided, but would like to study International Business.



Laura Servise
Sophomore
Kingsland, Texas

2011-12 (Sophomore): Walk-on who battled her way into the starting doubles lineup ... Garnered second-team All-Southland Conference honors at No. 3 doubles with partner (Elena Kordolaimi) ... Was 19-3 (.864) in doubles play, including a 13-2 (.867) record at No. 3 doubles with Kordolaimi ... The duo has won eight of the last 10 matches, including the third and decisive match to win the doubles point against Texas-Arlington in the SLC Championship finals ... Also posted a 4-2 (.667) singles record.

Before SFA: Played the 2011 season at Lee College under current `Jack assistant coach Stephanie Wooten... Played #3 and #4 in singles and #1 and 2 doubles for the Rebels... Was part of a strong Lee squad that featured three NJCAA All-American... Was part of the doubles team who breezed through the 2011 NJCAA National Championship draw without losing a set before posting a thrilling 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 victory in the final over in-state rival Tyler Junior College.

High School: Was a two-sport letterman in tennis and volleyball... Was a two-time state semifinalist... Was the #48-ranked player in Texas in 2010.

Personal: Daughter of Randy and Gayle Servise... Has one brother, J.B... Majoring in Criminal Justice.



Alina Shazhko
Senior
Simferopol, Ukraine

SFA all-time leader in singles wins (79) ... A three-time SLC Player of the Week selection.

2011-12 (Senior): First-team All-SLC honors in doubles (Jithmie Jayawickrema) ... Played Nos. 1-4 singles and No. 2 doubles ... Recorded a career-high 24 singles wins (24-8/.750) and 24 doubles wins ... Doubles team was ranked as high as 17th nationally ... Recorded a 20-3 (.870) mark at No. 2 doubles, a record which included wins over two top-30 teams ... Doubles team was a perfect 10-0 in SLC play ... Is one of five players with 20 wins on the season ... Named SLC Player of the Week (Mar. 27th) ... Went 10-2 (.833) at No. 2 singles ... Has won eight of her last nine singles matches, and nine of her last 10 doubles matches.

2010-11 (Junior): Two-time SLC Player of the Week ... Helped guide the `Jacks to a program-best 20-5 mark as a junior... Finished the year with a 28-7 overall singles record, which included a 20-3 record at the #1... Finished 19-7 overall in doubles, including 17-5 at the #1 position... Recorded 12-2 in singles and 5-3 in doubles in the fall ... Was the top draw singles champion at the TJC Apache Invitational ... Entered the spring season ranked #12 in the Texas region - an all-time program best, and tied the mark by finishing the season once again ranked 12th.

2009-10 (Sophomore): Recorded 12-11 in singles, including an 8-9 record at the Nos. 1 and 2 positions ... Posted an impressive 14-7 doubles record, including 10-5 at No. 1 doubles and a 7-3 mark in conference matches.

2008-09 (Freshman): Named Southland Conference Freshman of the Year ... Went 15-9 in singles play including, 7-3 at No. 2 singles... Went 19-9 on the year in doubles and posted a 15-7 mark at No. 1 doubles, including an 8-3 record in SLC matches.

High school: Was ranked as high as 855 in the Women's Tennis Association ... Semifinalist in both the 2007 Cairo Open and the 2007 Algerian Championships ... Won the Ukrainian championship her junior year and the 2006 Siaulai Mayor's Cup in Lithuania.

Personal: Daughter of Valeriy and Kateryna Shazhko ... Majoring in biochemistry.