

# NCAA Tennis

## Stanford teams to face off

By Kelley Theodocion  
Staff Writer

Stanford senior Alex O'Brien moved into position for another milestone as he and teammate Chris Cocotos advanced to the NCAA Men's Tennis Championships doubles final with a pair of victories Saturday at Henry Feild Stadium.

At 1 p.m. today, O'Brien will take on Georgia junior Wade McGuire for the singles championship. At the completion of that match, O'Brien and Cocotos, the tournament's No. 2 seed, will face unseeded Jason Yee and Vimal Patel, also of Stanford, for the doubles crown.

"I feel like a million bucks," said O'Brien following a 6-3, 6-3 doubles semifinal win over San Diego State's Jeff Belloli and Chris Numbers.

Yee and Patel overcame three match points to stun Tony Bujan and Luis Ruette of Texas Christian 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-3) in the semifinals.

After leading the Cardinal to a 12th NCAA team title Tuesday, O'Brien established a new mark for combined singles and doubles wins at the Championships during Friday's action. O'Brien now sports a 38-5 record in NCAA play.

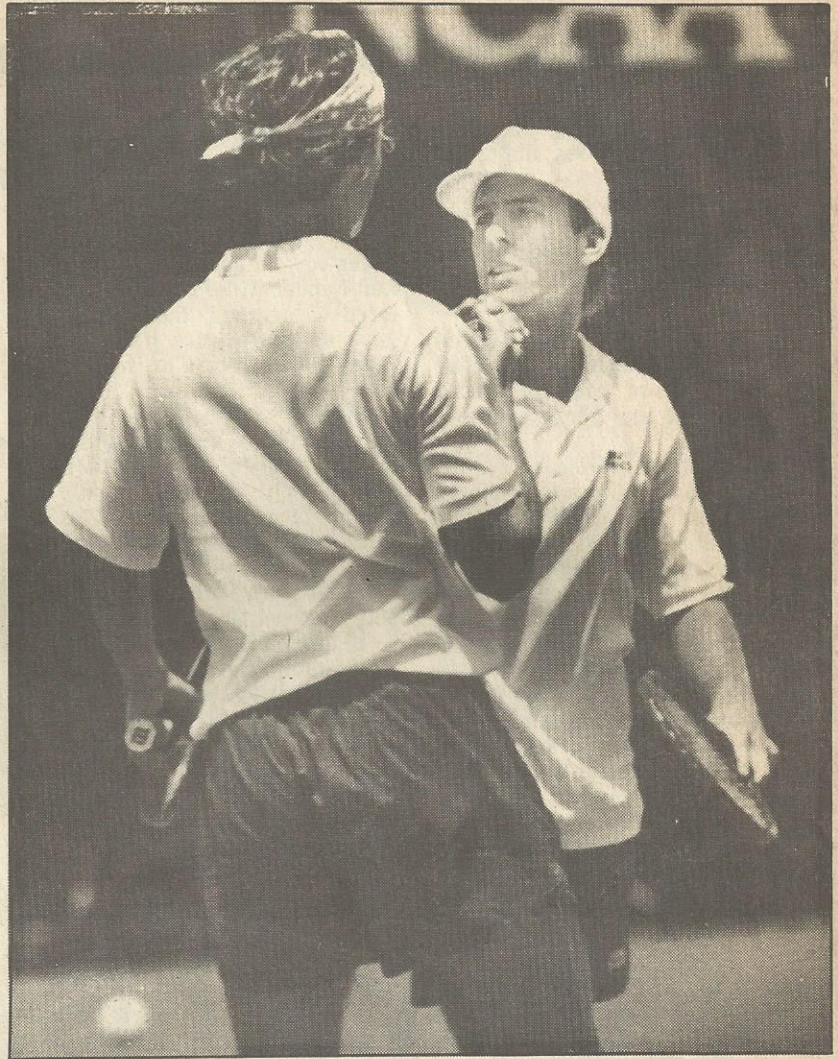
Today, O'Brien can match a feat managed by only one other, current Stanford assistant coach John Whitlinger. In 1974, Whitlinger led the Cardinal to the team title, won singles, and teamed with Jim Delaney for the doubles title.

Also at stake for the four Stanford players is a spot on the Cardinal Hall of Fame. Hanging on a wall in a conference room at the Stanford Tennis Stadium are action shots of past NCAA singles and doubles champions, both men and women. Among the notables are John McEnroe, Tim Mayotte, Dan Goldie and Jared Palmer.

"I don't think you want to go to practice every day next year and see somebody's else's picture up there," O'Brien said jokingly to Cocotos, a sophomore.

The two teams have met once before in competition: At the Pac-10 Championships in late April, O'Brien and Cocotos took a straight sets victory.

"It wasn't easy," Cocotos said. "I think all of us were a little nervous and it's tough to adjust to playing your own teammates. It's cer-



Wingate Downs/Staff

**Short-lived celebration:** San Diego State's Jeff Belloli and Chris Numbers enjoy their 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 quarterfinal win over Adam Krafft and Brian Uihlein Saturday. Later however, Belloli and Numbers were eliminated in the semis.

tainly not going to be any easier (today)."

"Even though we practice a lot together, it's tough to play a teammate," said Yee, who was O'Brien's doubles partner for two seasons. "I think it will be fun, too. We'll just do our best and see what happens. That's all you can ask."

And as for Cardinal coaches Dick Gould and Whitlinger? "That's a good question," Yee said. "I don't think they'll be out on the court. Maybe sitting in the stands and trying to enjoy it. We'll try to do that too."

A year ago, Yee was awarded his degree, but with a year of eligibility remaining, he decided to enroll in graduate school and return to the team. In July, he moves to Denver and begins working for Mutual Fund.

"I knew I wanted to come back," Yee said. "College tennis, for me, is all about the team competition. Last year, we fell short of our goal and came away disappointed, so what

the team did this year would have been enough."

Yee and Patel reached for a little extra late in the third set against Bujan and Ruette. With the TCU team up 5-3 and serving for the match, the Stanford duo raced to a 40-0 lead only to see TCU force deuce. Facing a fourth break point, however, Ruette's forehand sailed wide making it 5-4.

TCU then squandered three match-point opportunities in the tenth game.

"Coach Gould must have a magic potion for his players to have them hit all those big shots," Ruette said.

"We never thought we might lose, even when we were down 4-5 in the third," said a visibly exhausted Yee.

In the quarterfinals, Yee and Patel defeated Chris Mumford and Roland Thornqvist of North Carolina 2-6, 6-4, 6-4. O'Brien and Cocotos downed David Ekerot and Andras Lanyi of Southern Cal 7-6, 6-4.