

Atlanta – Stadium Court Notes – Friday, Aug. 13, 2021 – Match 6

2:25 pm – #2 Kelly Claes / Sarah Sponcil vs. #15 (Q7) Megan Kraft / Savannah Simo

Head to Head

- This is the first meeting between the teams
- None of these players have ever played against any of their opponents in their careers
- Sponcil and Simo were both on UCLA's beach volleyball team in 2018 and 2019

Claes / Sponcil are playing together for the 8th time on the AVP Tour and 32nd time overall

- The team has a best of 2nd twice on the AVP Tour, but has 2 FIVB wins (which gave them the berth for the Tokyo Olympics)
- In 2020 the duo had a 6-5 match record, with 3 losses to Alix Klineman / April Ross and 2 losses to Sara Hughes / Brandie Wilkerson
- In their partnership Claes / Sponcil have only had one AVP tournament in which they have not advanced to the semifinals (placed 5th in the second Long Beach event last year after losing a pair of three-set matches to the event's top two seeded teams)
- As partners on the AVP Tour, the duo has a 19-13 match record, is 18-3 when winning the first set, and is 5-5 in three-set matches

Kelly Claes – age 25 – 6'2" – hometown Placentia, Calif. – currently Fullerton, Calif. – Southern California

- This is Claes' 24th AVP event... she has 1 win, 4 seconds and 12 thirds
- Claes has been in the semifinals in 17 of her 23 AVP events (74% of the tournaments entered)
- Claes won her AVP title in Chicago 2017 when she was 21 years old... she has since played 14 AVP tournaments (before Atlanta) without being able to secure her second AVP victory
- In 2020 Claes led the Tour in kills (9.0 per set), was 3rd in hitting percentage (.444) and 5th in blocks (0.9 per set)

Sarah Sponcil – age 24 – 5'10" – hometown Phoenix, Ariz. – currently Phoenix, Ariz. – Loyola Marymount / UCLA

- Sponcil is playing in just her 14th AVP Tournament, with 3 2nd-place finishes and 4 3rd-place finishes
- Sponcil reached the championship match in her 2nd ever AVP tournament (Austin 2018)
- In 2020 Sponcil was tied for 5th on the Tour in digs (6.7 per set)

Kraft / Simo are playing together for the 1st time on the AVP Tour

- Yesterday they swept all three qualifier matches, never giving up more than 17 points in any of the 6 sets
- Their second match in the qualifier was against Larissa Franca (the three-time Olympian who is the all time leader in wins on both the FIVB Tour as well as the Brazilian National Tour)
- Their third match in the qualifier was against Maria Clara Salgado, a two-time winner on the FIVB Tour

Megan Kraft – age 18 – 6'0" – hometown San Diego, Calif. – currently San Diego, Calif. – Southern Cal

- This is Kraft's 5th AVP event, and her 3rd time in AVP main draw
- In the last APV tournament Kraft played prior to Atlanta, she and Delaynie Maple won three straight winner's bracket matches (against teams seeded #11, #6 and #3) and placed 5th in Hermosa Beach

Savannah Simo – age 22 – 5'10" – hometown Ranch Santa Fe, Calif. – currently Ranch Santa Fe, Calif. – UCLA

- This is Simo's 2nd AVP event (finished 81st in Hermosa Beach 2019)
- Simo tallied 91 victories while playing beach volleyball at UCLA, the 5th most in program history