

Manhattan Beach – Stadium Court Notes – Sunday, Aug. 22, 2021 – Match 1

9:00 am – #2 Kelly Claes / Sarah Sponcil vs #9 Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss

Head to Head

- This is a rematch of the title match from Atlanta last week, won by Kloth / Nuss 21-12, 19-21, 16-14

Claes / Sponcil are playing together for the 9th time on the AVP Tour and 33rd time overall

- The team has a best of 2nd three times on the AVP Tour (including in Atlanta), but has 2 FIVB wins
- 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 26-16 (61.9%) match record, is 25-4 (86.2%) when winning the first set, 1-12 (7.7%) when losing the first set, and is 5-7 (41.7%) in three-set matches

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

- This is Claes' 25th AVP event... she has 1 win, 5 seconds and 12 thirds
- Claes has been in the semifinals in 18 of her 24 AVP events (75% of the tournaments entered)
- Claes won her AVP title in Chicago 2017 when she was 21 years old... she has since played 15 AVP tournaments (before Manhattan Beach) 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)

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

- Sponcil is playing in her 15th AVP Tournament, with 4 second-place finishes and 4 third-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)

Kloth / Nuss are playing together for the 2nd time on the AVP Tour

- As partners on the AVP they have an 11-1 match record (including qualifiers) and 22-6 set record
- Kloth and Nuss both played for LSU beach volleyball in 2019, 2020 and 2021... Kloth and Nuss were teammates on court 1 in 2021, finishing the season 36-0
- Since the start of the 2001 season, there have been 12 women's teams which have won when competing for the first time as partners on the AVP Tour... the last two to do it before Kloth / Nuss did it in Atlanta were both in 2018 (April Ross / Alix Klineman in Austin and Sara Hughes / Summer Ross in New York City)
- They were the 2nd women's team in the history of the AVP (180 women's events with seeds known) that a qualifier has won the title (also Cincinnati 2013 – Emily Day / Summer Ross (#14 MD, #1 QT))

Taryn Kloth – age 24 – 6'4" – hometown Sioux Falls, S.D. – currently Metairie, La. – Creighton / Louisiana State

- This is Kloth's 2nd ever pro beach volleyball tournament... she joined an elite group of players who have won a title when making their AVP debut:
 - 1984 Florida – Linda Hanley and Nina Matthies won when both made their AVP debut
 - 1984 Chicago – Dale Keough won making her AVP debut
 - 1993 Phoenix – Holly McPeak and Angela Rock won when both made their AVP debut
 - 1999 Clearwater – Elaine Youngs won making her AVP debut
 - 2003 Fort Lauderdale – Kerri Walsh Jennings won making her AVP debut
 - 2009 Glendale – Juliana Felisberta and Larissa Franca won when both made their AVP debut
- Kloth went 50-0 in matches her last two seasons of beach volleyball at LSU

Kristen Nuss – age 23 – 5'6" – hometown New Orleans, La. – currently Metairie, La. – Louisiana State

- This is Nuss' 7th AVP event, and the 4th time she has played in the main draw
- Nuss had 139 career wins at LSU, the most in program history