

Aztec Tennis Reporter

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Coaches, Families Helped Steer Aztec Teammates Home Across Globe

MILES TO HOME

- DAVID HOUGH 8,300
- ALICIA MELOSCH 7,060
- CECILE MORIN 6,138
- JULIA JORDAN 84
- NNENA NADOZIE 120
- IGNACIO MARTINEZ 2,659
- ABBIE MULBARGER 476
- AGUSTINA RIMOLDI GODOY 6,709
- MIA SMITH 5,508
- TAMARA ARNOLD 5,937
- AARO POLLANEN 5,664
- ARNAUD RESTIFO 6,277
- FABIAN ROENSDORF 5,961
- ALEX SCEMANCO 24
- DANIEL TRAXLER 1,358
- JAN KIRCHHOFF 5,834
- JULES AUFRAY 6,086
- RAFAEL GONZALEZ ALMAZAN 5,846



★ **GLOBAL ROSTERS:** Aztec tennis players faced decisions of whether and how to return to families in Switzerland, France, Germany, Finland, Argentina, Australia, and Mexico, as well as Florida, Texas, and California.

When a Season Vanished, a Search Began for Safety

The NCAA tennis season shutdown turned the world upside down for 18 Aztec men and women, confronting them with the task of traveling often extraordinary distances at a time of risk and rapid change.

Coaches and parents worked diligently to help assist what became a worldwide evacuation operation.

ATR asked Aztec players and coaches to describe what happened.

On the last day of March, Aztec senior David Hough left San Diego and flew to Los Angeles, then overnight to Melbourne, Australia on the last Qantas flight before its international shutdown.

Hough, who won Mountain West

Player of the Week in January, was met by his parents, who brought two cars to the airport. Their two-hour drive home to Traralong in separate vehicles symbolizes the tumultuous nature of the new world order.

By driving alone, Hough was beginning a two-week quarantine that extended to a guest

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DAVID HOUGH, TRARALONG, AUSTRALIA:

“Initially I had planned to stay until July so I could finish my degree and my

Hough

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In Their Own Words: Aztecs Navigating the Road Home, Online Study

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family come over for my graduation and see some of California. Then I would stay the summer months to train and coach and enjoy San Diego one last time because it would be winter in Australia anyway and I wouldn't get much tennis.

But everything happened so quickly with the season getting cancelled and classes taken online it was really disappointing to end that way.

And then Qantas, our Australian airline announced there would be no more flights to Australia at all from the end of March until at least August. So my parents got very worried and convinced me I need to come back or I'll be stuck in the US.

So I spent hours on the phone for a few days straight trying to change my flights in time which was difficult because I fly San Diego to LAX, then LAX to Melbourne. And one or the other kept getting cancelled and changed, even on the day of the flight. But I managed to get the very last flight to Australia which was lucky.

All people entering Australia were required to do 14 days complete isolation so my parents drove 2 cars to the airport and made me drive myself home in one of them and went straight to our guest bedroom where I spent 2 weeks inside. The drive home is 2 hours from the airport.

Didn't even get to hug or say hi to them before I was let out. They would bring food to the door and stuff.

It was awful being stuck in a room that long but thankful I didn't have the virus and have now been let out and can do whatever around the house.

It was good to return home. However, my classes are all between 2 am and 6 am due to the time difference which is frustrating. Just happy to be

home and everyone is healthy.

ALICIA MELOSCH, HALSTENBEK, GERMANY:



Melosch

"I flew from San Diego to Washington DC, from there to Frankfurt and Frankfurt to Hamburg. There were no problems, just people wearing masks. I flew with United till Frankfurt and from there to Hamburg with Lufthansa. Fortunately, everything worked out. Halstenbek is 20/25 minutes away from the airport. My dad picked me up. Stay safe!"

AARO POLLANEN, HELSINKI, FINLAND:



Pollanen

"I flew back home to Finland at the end of March. Everything went really nice and easy with the travels, no major problems en route. I flew Los Angeles-London-Helsinki. The airports were obviously pretty empty but other than that, everything seemed to work normally with the travels. And I had a mandatory 2 weeks quarantine at home after travels. Classes: I'm an economics major. My classes are going fine, I have a few tougher classes this semester but overall the classes are going pretty well."

JULIA JORDAN, ENSENADA, MEXICO:



Jordan

"For me, the situation was a little bit different. Home was not that far from SDSU, so it wasn't that difficult to get back. However, the whole process was very fast and having our season cancelled was very confusing and dull. I had to leave campus as soon as the coaches told us we were allowed because I was afraid they were going to close the border with Mexico (where I live). Those 2 days were the most stressful days because nobody knew what to do or what was going to happen. So I had to pack every-

thing in less than 24 hours and leave in the morning. There were a lot of people trying to buy things and drive

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HOW COACHES REACTED, HOW PLAYERS GOT HOME SAFELY

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back so this created a lot of chaos in the border. Since I had a lot of stuff from my dorm, we had to go into the inspection area and that took me 2 hours because they wanted me to declare my luggage was my own stuff and not products to sell. Fortunately, I was able to get home safe that same afternoon and stay with my family.”

PETER MATTERA, WOMEN’S HEAD COACH:

Nico (Vinel, associate head coach) and I were trying to be facilitators, as best we could, both with them getting everything they needed together for their trip home and / or making sure that they would have everything they need to complete their academics successfully at their next stop.

IGNACIO MARTINEZ, WESTON, FLORIDA:

I’m actually still in San Diego, planning to go back home to Florida soon to spend the summer with my family. Other than that not much else I can tell you ahahah. Just jumping rope and lots of pushups. Online classes are going well, an adjusting period for us all but teachers are doing a pretty good job at keeping it interactive and keeping us busy. I’m studying interdisciplinary studies with my emphasis being communication, psychology and RTM (Requirement Traceability Matrix), but with the extra year of eligibility I’m thinking of doing a masters here at SDSU.

TAMARA ARNOLD, OLTEN, SWITZERLAND:

Everything good here (in Switzerland). We’re slowly getting back to normal. By beginning of May they will allow non-contact sports to practice again!



Arnold

I flew from San Diego to Fort Lauderdale (paid only \$25) to visit my boyfriend (who lives there). Before I left San Diego, I called American Airlines to rebook my flight to Switzerland, which was booked for end of May (when our tennis sea-

son finishes). I changed my flight home to leave from Miami (instead of end of May, I wanted to leave around the 30th of March).

When I landed in Fort Lauderdale, I spent about 2 days there, before everything became even worse (borders in Europe started to close). And then my flight got cancelled. TWICE.

I was so freaked out because everything went bad so quickly and Switzerland’s borders were going to close too. So instead of waiting it out until the 30th, I decided to call American Airlines again and rebook. They thankfully did!!

I then literally flew the next day, had to pack my stuff asap and got out of the US. I flew from Miami to London Heathrow (10 hour flight) and had an 8 hour layover there, and then flew from London to Zurich. (2 hours).

My parents came to pick me up. I was so glad I got home in time before the lockdown started.

ALEX SCEMANENCO, CARDIFF-BY-THE-SEA:

Yes, I drove myself home right away. It was an easy ride.

PETER MATTERA, WOMEN’S HEAD COACH:

“We still have Agustina (Rimoldi Godoy) in San Diego. Her family thought she’d probably be better off here. She lives here in an apartment off-campus and so she decided and her family decided it would be in her best interest to stick around. So she’s staying for now maybe until the end of the semester and just doing her coursework online from her apartment.



Rimoldi Godoy

Mia (Smith) is still here. She’s our only graduating senior and she also lives in an off-campus apartment. She’s taking her last credits (all online classes anyway). She lives with her boyfriend. And then her plan, as of now (April 12), is when she finishes her coursework and when the semester is over they’re going to go, the two of them, from San



Smith

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HOW COACHES REACTED, HOW PLAYERS GOT HOME SAFELY

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Mattera

Diego to Australia and that's where she's going to try to find a job and start the next part of her life.

GENE CARSWELL, MEN'S HEAD COACH:

I talk to Rafa (Rafael Gonzalez Almazan) quite a bit. Very tough on him because, you know, he lives in Madrid, and if you live in the City of Madrid, usually you live in an apartment, so he's kind of cooped up in an apartment with his family and I feel like he's



Carswell

had a little bit of cabin fever. I mean having to spend so much time inside. They haven't loos-



Gonzalez Almazan

ened up restrictions to let people out for exercise. The only reason you're allowed to go out is basically if you've got a doctor's appointment or you're going to the market, something extremely essential, like taking your pet outside to go to the bathroom, but otherwise there's huge fines they've put in place if you're caught outside without any real purpose.

Jules (Auffray) is in the south of France. He's in one of the best situations, because he's able to get out and exercise. He's got access to a tennis court, practicing back at home. His father (Charles Auffray) is a former collegiate and ATP Tour player so he's getting good practice, good workout, so he's doing pretty well back in France.



Auffray

How the Season Vanished and the Search Began for Safety

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bedroom and separate meals for 14 days.

Total travel distance: 8,300 miles.

Aztec Cecile Morin struggled through four airline flight cancellations before hiring Uber to drive her to Los Angeles International Airport.

"I flew from LA to Paris by Air France and then Paris to Marseille," she said. "My mother picked me up at the airport." Total distance traveled: 6,138 miles.

Julia Jordan traveled 84 miles to Ensenada to her parent's home (her father at the wheel), anticipating a border shut-

down.

At least four teammates stayed in San Diego in off-campus apartments: Agustina Rimoldi Godoy of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Mia Smith of Tunbridge Wells, England, Fabian Roensdorf of Dortmund, Germany, and Ignacio

Martinez of Weston, Florida.

One Aztec men's player, Jan Kirchhoff, returned home to Berlin, Germany, a distance of 5,834 miles.

The speed of change had an almost whiplash effect.

Coach Mattera said: "We went from playing what turned out to be our last dual match of the year on Wednesday, March 11, where everything was relatively fine and normal, and in 48 hours, the ball started rolling down the hill."

7 Aztecs Win Mountain West Conference Honors

Seven San Diego State women and men won Mountain West Conference honors in tennis for the 2020 spring season.

Aztec Cecile Morin was named co-freshman of the year. In singles, Aztecs Nnena Nadozie and Tamara Arnold were selected for the All-Conference team. Aztecs Tamara Arnold and Julia Jordan won doubles honors.

Aztec Fabian Roensdorf was chosen for the all-conference men's singles team. Aztecs Ignacio Martinez and Rafael Gonzalez Almazan were honored for their doubles performances.

The awards were announced on April 30. The NCAA shortened all 2020 collegiate sports seasons due to safety concerns related to the international health crisis.