

# Citi Open

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Washington D.C.

## Mackenzie McDonald

### Press Conference



M. McDONALD/B. Paire

6-7, 6-4, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. What is going through your mind after the tough first set to get the victory?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: He put together a lot of points in a row, I think 11 in a row, until I stopped the bleeding a bit. He's dangerous. He can do so many things, so many weapons. I wasn't too happy about not holding at 4-5 or 5-4.

Somehow regrouped it, got in the tiebreaker. Close tiebreak. I gave myself a lot of chances to win that set. It was a little unfortunate. I don't think I played honestly my best tennis. I feel like I could have closed it out a lot easier today.

**Q. What does it mean to be back in the top 100?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: Yeah, I mean, it's big. Honestly now that's come to something. It's about damn time (smiling). I've been grinding, I've been working so hard to come back. So many people put so much emphasis on the top hundred. The players do. It's a big statement.

Being back in that is really big for me, to be honest. Yeah, I mean, I personally am going to pat myself on the back. I think it's really well deserved. I think I played some great tennis this year. I think it's just the start again.

**Q. Are you a better player now than you were two years ago? What has changed for you over the past two years?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: I'd say I'm a better tennis player. I was playing great tennis, doing a lot of really good things when I got hurt. I was really at my peak.

I think stepping away from the court for a while,

appreciating all the things I had out here, understanding my game, going through it again, having the confidence to go through it again, too, was big.

I think I have more tools now. I feel like I know -- I'm older. You learn things as you get older. That's just natural. More experiences. Yeah, I'm definitely better now.

**Q. Do you have some optimism going forward here?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: Sorry? Do I have optimism going forward?

**Q. Yes, here in the States, on the hard courts.**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: Yeah, for sure. I'm excited to be back on the hard courts. A long time away with the whole European swing. I feel like I actually did really well with that.

Being back on hard courts, my favorite surface, playing a lot of the tournaments I played before. I guess I've been here a lot. Cincinnati has been great memories for me. I played Toronto before once.

I'm excited. I mean, I think I'm going to keep playing better and better tennis. I'm happy with getting some wins here so far. But I think I'm going to keep improving as the hard court swing goes on. Hopefully I'll finish strong at the Open, yeah.

**Q. When you drop a big first set lead, lose in a tiebreak, would that have been a match a couple years ago you might have folded up, today different result?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: Yeah, I mean, it's easy for me to say yes to that. But, yeah, I mean, I'm happy with coming back and winning that. I wanted to win, so... Glad I got it.

**Q. The USTA has announced the US Open qualifying rounds will be closed to the public. You can buy a main draw ticket because they're at 100% capacity three days after qualifying. They say they're doing it to protect you, the players. Do you have any thoughts on**



that?

MACKENZIE McDONALD: I mean, quallies is honestly a great experience. I've played a lot of qualifying this year with French and Wimbledon. I mean, it's a dogfight out there. That's honestly where a lot of, like, the pro tennis really is pretty cool and interesting. There's a lot of really good stories. All these guys in quallies, it's an absolute dogfight. So I have so much respect for everyone competing in the quallies. I've been there many times.

I don't know honestly all the rules, regulations for the Open yet. I don't really know for New York, the government there, too. Yeah, I honestly don't really know much about it. I didn't know that, so can't comment.

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