

# Citi Open

Friday, August 6, 2021

Washington D.C.

## Mackenzie McDonald

Press Conference



M. McDONALD/D. Kudla

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. What is it like to play a player with which you're very familiar as part of the United States contingent?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: Yeah, I mean, it's always pretty tough, you know. I think he had maybe a little more pressure, having the D.C. crowd, being the home favorite. Kind of took the underdog role today.

Denis is a close friend. I have known him the whole time I have been on tour. I've played challengers against him. Even this year we have played a lot of the same tournaments. Been hanging out. Hitting a lot, too. He's a good friend. We both respect each other. We both had a great tournament. Yeah, it's not very easy.

**Q. Your performance today, felt like you were in control start to finish, raced out to a quick 4-1 lead. What was working so well for you on court?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: Honestly, I think I'm serving well. It really helps. You said yesterday, 71%. Maybe that went up a percent today. Then I returned well. I think I just handled the nerves better too.

I don't think Denis brought his best game today. It was tough, tough match. I definitely was in there every game, every point, and stuck it to him.

**Q. I believe this is your first semifinal at the ATP level since Delray Beach 2019. What's it mean for you to get back to a semifinal stage here in D.C.?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: Yeah, massive, honestly. I mean, massive. It's pretty cool. I get to play Kei tomorrow. That will be a tough match, for sure.

Yeah, I mean, it means a lot. Haven't been here before.

**Q. You mentioned in your postmatch interview, I know Nishikori, that's a game style near and dear to your heart. You watched quite a bit of growing up. Your thoughts on getting to play him tomorrow in the semifinal stage, what it's going to take to get over the hump?**

MACKENZIE McDONALD: I'm going to have to serve well. I mean, I know we are both going to be in the return games with making a ton of returns. But, you know, I will try to use my weapons, hit flat, come forward, use my speed.

Hopefully I've got some young legs for me against him. We'll see what happens, but I'll do all the prep work and figure out how to do it with my coach.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports