

Citi Open

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Washington D.C.

Jessica Pegula

Press Conference



J. PEGULA/H. Baptiste

6-2, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Out there with the hometown favorite, talk us through what the match was like.

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, it was definitely tough playing Hailey today. I know she's a local favorite, super nice girl, really talented, can play really well at times.

Definitely a little nervous going out there, kind of feeling your way through the match. I thought I did a good job of applying pressure right from the beginning, being able to break a couple times early, keep that momentum with me. Got a little hot out there, but not too bad.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What did you think today kind of made the ultimate difference between you and Hailey, especially later in each set as the sun got hotter, deuces got longer?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I mean, I thought maybe I attacked her serve a little bit better, and vice versa situation, I think I put a lot of pressure, elongated a lot of her service games.

I know from personal experience, when it's really tough to hold, it definitely can take a toll physically and mentally. As it got a little hot out there, I was able to move a little better, kind of extend the rallies sometimes.

Especially when she was serving, I think she would get a little tired on her serve, miss a few more first serves. Then I was able to step in on her second serve when I could. I was able to execute that today and I think maybe that made a difference.

Q. The 2-2 deuce in the second set, what do you tell yourself in that situation to keep yourself going?

JESSICA PEGULA: I think I'm always trying to make sure I keep the pressure on the whole game. I think when it kind

of goes back and forth, I mean, I want to win the game but at the same time if I lose the game, I'm thinking to myself, That's how she's going to have to play every single game if she's going to hold. I try to keep a positive mindset either way.

I try to still be aggressive. I try to take my chances on those break points because I think that can make the difference. Just hitting one good return, especially on these courts, can be the difference between winning a game and going back to deuce or something like that.

Q. I noticed you're active playing doubles. Not a lot of top-ranked players do. Is this something that helps to improve your singles? Do you do it in place of normal workouts?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I wasn't really planning on playing doubles here this week. Actually last minute, I was like, You know what, I don't know, I feel like playing.

I think it's good to get extra matches in. Personally I just love playing. If I start playing doubles, I'm going to finish the tournament. I'm not going to pull out because of singles or anything like that. I think that's a commitment that you have to make.

I genuinely just like to win and I love tennis and I like playing. To me, even if you lose in singles, you still have the same kind of tournament routine in doubles. I think that's important because sometimes something happens and you lose early in singles, the weeks can really drag on. It's tough to get a practice court because people are still in the tournament. It kind of drags on and you're bored, there's not much to do.

To me staying in that mental state I think helps traveling and helps the weeks. It's always good when you're winning.

Q. Is there anything technique-wise that doubles helps with?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, well, I mean, first of all, it's like pressure situations. Honestly sometimes there's more



pressure situations when you're in doubles, it's a no-ad point, especially the format we play. That can feel like more pressure than a singles match. Yeah, pressure situations.

Obviously serve returns, moving forward. I think a lot of times if I'm not serving well, okay, when you play doubles tomorrow, work on a couple things like your toss or your motion, whatever it is. Yeah, you're definitely always getting extra reps in, and I think that's really important.

Does it directly translate? Maybe not always. Again, you're hitting returns, you're hitting serves, hitting volleys, working on a lot more intangibles. I think those things definitely helped my singles.

Q. Being the defending champion here in D.C. after a weird break between 2019 and now, does it feel like you're a defending champion still?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I mean, everyone keeps asking me about it, so it definitely feels like I'm the defending champion.

But, yeah, it definitely feels weird. It was kind of a bummer when all this happened and I was like, Oh, I'm not going to get a chance to defend my title. At the same time I was like, Okay, I guess I'll be the defending champion until whenever the tournament comes back and I don't have to do anything. That was also kind of nice.

Yeah, definitely feels like it. It's so great to be back. I think a lot of the girls really love this tournament. We love the city. We love being here to start the US Open swing. I'm really happy it's back.

Q. You played your last three tournaments on three different surfaces. What goes into making those adjustments? What does it mean to you to have a game that can translate?

JESSICA PEGULA: I didn't think about that. I played French, Wimbledon and here. Definitely a little tricky.

Going back to the hard always feels pretty easy to me. Being an American, we grew up on a lot of these hard courts. I had a couple really good weeks of training. It didn't feel too difficult.

I would say probably the hardest transition was probably playing the French and trying to go play Wimbledon. Probably the hardest. No, I had enough time where I think the transition was pretty easy.

Again, being back on hard courts, I probably feel the most

comfortable if I'm being honest. Wasn't too bad. I had enough time.

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