

Citi Open

Tuesday, August 2, 2022

Washington D.C.

Ajla Tomljanovic

Press Conference



A. TOMLJANOVIC/S. Stephens

6-1, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Obviously a tough win today against a really good opponent. Just talk about the match overall and the conditions out there.

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Yeah, I think, I mean, I have been in Florida for the last two weeks, so I think it's quite similar with the heat and humidity, but I thought I played a really, really good match.

It got a little tricky at the end. I definitely thought about, you know, the fact that I haven't beaten her so far and been close a few times, so I got nervous and played a few loose games, but just very pleased to close it out in the end.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Is there anything that you did differently to get this outcome? I didn't realize you had never beaten Sloane until this afternoon. It seems like, yeah, that's breaking down a barrier for you to finally get a win over a good quality player like her.

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Yeah. I think today I stayed composed when I was ahead, because I feel like -- I mean, there are two matches that stick out with her. One was like years ago in Australia, second round. I was like up a set, 5-3, and then in Charleston, as well. Both those matches I think would have been big for my career. That's why I always, you know, know that beating her is good (smiling).

So it's just about when I'm ahead, staying within my game and keep doing what I'm doing. I think I did that pretty well today.

Q. Could you talk a bit about playing Liudmila in the next round? I think you have played only once before.

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Yeah, we played last year indoors. Actually practiced with her here. I think her serve is going

to be a task tomorrow, because she has a really good kick, and here it jumps pretty high. I think it's going to be definitely a hard-hitting match.

I'll try to, you know, be the one that dictates, but I think it will be a little more -- I will be getting a bit more pace than I did today from her. Yeah, I think it's going to be a tough one, for sure.

Q. Shifting gears a little bit, we have seen a lot of really great singles players also play doubles. You are one who has played doubles in the past throughout your career. Is there any kind of bonus that playing doubles brings to your singles game, anything you work on specifically when you're playing doubles that helps in singles?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: For sure. I would much rather on a day off play doubles than train, so that's one for me. It's always better in any kind of competitive match to work on your returns, your game coming in, your volleys.

So from me, I mean, whenever I can, I try to play. Except 250s, it's just tough, like if it's physical, you know, and especially with my schedule now, I'm in quallies next week. So in case I lose early, I don't want to stay.

So for me, you know, I had to think about more things than one. So that sucks in a way, because I would have loved to play here. But in the slams, I really enjoy playing doubles just because it's, I mean, nice.

Q. You're gearing towards something like US Open, it's kind of hard to play doubles all the time, but is there a reason beyond just kind of the training aspect of it and getting reps in that really great singles players like yourself love playing doubles? Is it just the love of tennis kind of?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: I mean, I think you definitely have players that really love playing and hate playing. Trust me, there are a few like, Oh, doubles.

I think I'm one of those where I like playing with friends and people I get along with. It's just good vibes. There is a bit



of less pressure. You know, in doubles it's a little more fun. I think you'll see me smile way more in doubles than I do in singles.

So I'm still learning to love doubles just because I'm not as free in my volleys and stuff. But I definitely think people, players, vary in how much they like it and some play for different reasons. But, yeah, I think overall we all do enjoy it more.

Q. I wondered if you could share a little bit of insight with us what it's been like being part of The Tennis Channel series where you are being profiled week in and week out on the tour. Is that something you have enjoyed? Has it helped your profile among fans?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Yeah, I mean, it's funny, because I feel like in the States obviously, a lot of people this week have come up to me and were, Oh, I love watching your tennis life on Tennis Channel.

I get almost surprised because I totally forget that people actually watch it. I just put a lot of effort into sending in videos and stuff and getting as much interesting content as possible, because certain weeks, you know, it's really boring, my life. Like I just train, I eat. So I try to mix it up and make it fun.

Weeks like here are good. I still haven't filmed a lot, so I will probably, you know, get on it today and tomorrow.

It's really nice when people, like in person, tell me that they like watching it. It gives me motivation to keep going.

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