

Mubadala Citi DC Open

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Washington D.C.

Paula Badosa

Press Conference



P. BADOSA/C. Dolehide

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THE MODERATOR: Can you share your thoughts on the match and reaching the final.

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, I'm really happy. I think today I played very good, I served very well. I played aggressive. It was a little bit windy, but I played very good even though the conditions.

Really happy with my performance today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. It was a little hard to hear your interview on court after, but I think I heard you say you were feeling emotional about reaching the final here. Can you describe your emotions on playing your first time here and reaching this far.

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, look, I've been saying this since a few weeks ago that I'm playing well, that I knew my moment was going to come, but I didn't know when.

I was feeling that I was losing close matches lately and that my moment was going to come. I just needed to have patience.

But yeah, finally I play another final. It's been a while. For me, the emotions are more that especially the beginning of the year, a year injured and everything, there was moments that was coming to my mind, Am I going to be able to get back to the level I want to?

That was tough for me because my back wasn't responding. Finally it is. My body, I'm feeling now an athlete again.

For me, it's really emotional to be back in a final and to be fighting for titles.

Q. You had just come off of playing a long match

against Emma the day before. What do you make of how your body held up from yesterday to today?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, I was surprised. I was a little bit scared, I'm going to be honest, after the match yesterday. I'm like, Whoa, I don't know how I'm going to recover. I was having pain everywhere (smiling).

But today I felt pretty good. Happy with that. I did a good recovery. My body was completely fine. I think that's a big win already in my case.

Yeah, today it helped that it went pretty fast and it wasn't that hot. Hopefully I'll feel great for tomorrow.

Q. Yesterday you were suggesting that your coach is trying to encourage you to fully appreciate and enjoy. It sounds like when you talk about the emotion of reaching the final, still one match to go, but do you appreciate...

PAULA BADOSA: When I get to finals, yeah, but just to finals (smiling).

No, yeah, I try. Every morning when I wake up, I try to appreciate it. It's tough sometimes because I'm very, like, perfectionist. But I'm trying to value every moment.

Now it's a final, so I need to try to enjoy it because, as I say, it's been a while, more than a year almost, too, with a lot of struggles. I will try to enjoy as much as I can.

Q. I imagine you have a better appreciation for it, given the time that has taken place since the last time?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, yeah. And also with all that I went through. As I say, I'm not going to lie, in February I remember having injections. I had after Rome also, like a few months ago. I wasn't seeing the light. How am I going to keep continue like this?

After all, now seeing myself a different player physically, mentally, and even tennis-wise, for me it's unbelievable.

Also I have this, like, thing inside of me that a lot of people



didn't believe it was going to be possible. They were, like, retiring me from tennis. Also that helps me and keeps pushing me more and motivates me more, so...

Q. You've had a good run, had momentum coming into this tournament. Specific to this week, the matches you've played this week, anything stand out as far as what has allowed you this week to build a few matches consecutively?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, I think also what changed a bit or what's changing a bit is that the other tournaments before, it was just like I wanted it so much, it was like a need, I need to win this match no matter what. That was putting so much pressure on myself that I wasn't able to play in maybe the important moments as well as now.

I think now in this tournament after Wimbledon, that's a little bit what it happened to me the most in that match. I took some days off. I was, like, working on myself especially mentally, talking to my coach. I was like, Look, in this U.S. swing, I want to be aggressive in the important points. If I lose it like that, it's going to be okay. It's the way, you know?

I think that's a little bit what I'm doing. Yesterday with Emma, there were some shots that didn't work well, but I was still going for it. Then at the end of the third set, it helped me more going for it. So it's a little bit the mentality. I wanted to change the mindset. This week it worked pretty well. Also that mindset was the mindset I had when I was in the top 10. I want to get back to that.

Q. You said earlier this year you weren't sure if you would be able to continue playing. Was there a moment where you decided or realized that you were not done, you could keep going?

PAULA BADOSA: Yes. I mean, I still have to every day speak with the doctors and have to control that a lot because there's some days that I feel the back, but there's other days that I can continue.

There was something inside me. I'm like, Look, no matter how much pain I have, I need to prove everyone wrong, that I'm going to be able to get back to it because I deserve it.

That was the thing that was keep pushing me the most, reading all these people that say, Oh, just retire. You have nothing to do. Your level is not the same any more.

I'm like, No worries, just wait for it.

Q. If it's Aryna in the final, what would it mean to you

to play a final against a close friend?

PAULA BADOSA: It's special. Look, it's the kind of players I want to face in the finals. I was a little bit frustrated at the beginning of the year that I needed matches, and I was just facing Aryna. She was, like, playing unbelievable. It was tough to face her in the beginning in the first rounds.

Now facing her in a final, it's where I want to face her. It's going to be special, tough at the same time, but it's the kind of matches you want.

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