

Western & Southern Open

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Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Angelique Kerber

Press Conference



A. KERBER/P. Kvitova

6-4, 3-3 [Ret.]

THE MODERATOR: Obviously never great for a match to end in a retirement like that, but just talk us through the match, and particularly the first set and how you felt you played today.

ANGELIQUE KERBER: Yeah, I mean, of course it's not the way I want to win a match, actually, and also not against Petra. I mean, we both are good friends, as well, off court, and we have played so many matches in the last years.

It's always a tough battle against her. I wish her all the best and speedy recovery for the US Open.

You know, I think the first set I was playing pretty good. I was trying to be aggressive and serving good. That was the goal actually. Yeah, and then, you know, just playing like I played in the last few days here.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Your thoughts on your next match, playing against Ash Barty.

ANGELIQUE KERBER: You know, it's another tough match. I know that I have to play my best tennis against her. You know, I know that, yeah, it will be a good match, another good match.

This is actually why I'm here, to have a lot of good matches against the best players before going to the US Open. Tomorrow is another one. I'm looking forward, and I'm excited to playing against Ash again.

Q. Will the Wimbledon match you recently played be a factor coming into this one again when you meet in the semis here?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: You know, I mean, of course I will speak with my team about the last match against Ash, what can I do better. You know, I will try to do it tomorrow.

But, you know, it's another match on another surface. You know, I think the conditions are also a little bit different than in Wimbledon.

You know, I played against Ash so many times, so I know what to expect. She played such amazing season already. It's more that I want to go out there to playing good tennis and try to take my chances when I get it, and, you know, I'm sure it will be a good match.

Q. You have been at the absolute top of the sport. You have been around a long time. There have also been some moments where things haven't gone well. Since June or so, things have really turned around with a title, Wimbledon performance, et cetera. What do you think has clicked for you?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: You know, I think it's more the process where I go through. I mean, in my career, I had always the up-and-downs. I'm through the best moments but also through really tough moments in my career.

But, you know, I was really constantly, like, I had always the consistently to working hard and I also worked hard the last few months, starting the year.

You know, I think it's just the patience that I had to know that one day maybe it turn around, maybe it click one match, and then I get my confidence back. Then, you know, I go through tough matches, as well.

This is what's happened actually also in Germany when I played in my home country with the fans then playing of course on grass, which is my favorite surface. Now I just try to continue how I played there, and, you know, staying in my flow and enjoying my tennis as well again, because I know, you know, there are always up-and-downs, and you need to have your patience.

Q. You have played Ash six times. I think the first time you guys played was right around when she started to come back in Brisbane, 2017, a tough three-set match. Curious if the Ash Barty we know now, World No. 1, two-time major champion, all that sort of stuff, does that surprise you, given the way that

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you guys first kind of played your initial matches and what you knew of her then?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: Actually, not really, because I remember when I played against Ash first time in Australia, she was already such a talented player. You know, she's always one of the players which can play everything. Doesn't matter which surface. She's there, she's, you know, running for every ball, but also she's playing aggressive, as well, with the slice, doing less mistakes.

So, you know, I think she's all-rounder, and I knew it already when we played the first time and also the matches after that. I mean, it's always tough to play against her, and I know I have to play my best tennis.

Also now she has so much confidence. She learned a lot. She improved so much on and off court and also as a player, so she's for sure a champion. She won so many Grand Slams now, and, you know, for me it's just another match that I want to try to play good, to see how good I can play.

Of course I try to win it, but, you know, it's just to having one more match, maybe two before then going to US Open.

Q. A quick question about Torben. Obviously the decision to reteam with him, you guys may not have had the success right away of finding that magic, but obviously you're finding it again now. You have known him for so long. He knows your game inside and out since you were a teenager. What's it like for you to go on this part of your journey in your career with Torben alongside you?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: You know, for me it's really important, and I'm very happy to have him on my side, because he knows me so well and he knows how I played the last years, how I start, you know, all my up-and-downs through my career.

I think the most important thing is that I can trust him, as well, also as a person. I respect him as a coach. And to working with someone which knows you very well, it's always something, especially in this time now where you spend a lot of time together, it's really important to have a great team around you.

Q. An off-court question. When you're on a long-haul flight, what are the things that you do onboard? Is it just a matter of sleeping the whole flight? Do you watch the entertainment, read a book? Do you bring your own meals on board because of the diets that players have, et cetera? What's your take on long-haul

flights?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: You know, I think I'm not the player who is so complicated when I'm flying long flights. For me, it's more like when I'm sitting on the plane and I have my flight mode on, I'm so happy to have a long flight, because no one can reach me. I'm just trying to sleep the whole time.

You know, this is actually one of my recovery times where I'm really out of order and I can sleep, I can think about everything and, you know, just be by myself (smiling).

Q. No phones, no Wi-Fi?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: No, nothing, nothing (smiling).

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