

Western & Southern Open

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Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Madison Keys

Press Conference



M. KEYS/I. Swiatek

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations on an amazing win. It's your first win over World No. 1. Can you talk us through how that feels.

MADISON KEYS: It feels great. I obviously have not had the best success against World No. 1s, so being able to get a win against Iga, especially after having two losses to her already, means a lot to me, and I think I'm playing some pretty good tennis.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. You have had a couple big, special moments here. You won your Masters here back in 2019, then today your first win over a World No. 1. A lot of players struggle here, but it seems to be the exact opposite for you. What would you say makes Cincinnati such a special place for you to play?

MADISON KEYS: I love the conditions here. I'm training in Florida, so I love the heat. I think the speed of the court really suits my game. I like how fast it plays.

I think obviously a lot of it has to do with fan support, and just having all of that fan support every match I have ever played here I think is really beneficial for me.

Q. What do you like specifically about the way you are playing right now?

MADISON KEYS: I think the biggest thing is just coming off of a tough loss in Toronto in singles but being able to get on the doubles court with Sania was great for me, and I think it really helped my serve and my returns. I think that has really kind of been the structure of why I have been playing well here, just because I have been getting a lot of first balls in.

And then just being okay to have to run down a bunch of balls. I played a bunch of people in a row who are either very good, hit very hard, or make a lot of balls. So I have

had to be really consistent.

Q. Up 5-Love, all of a sudden it's 5-4. What were you thinking at that point? How did you regroup?

MADISON KEYS: I was really just thinking that I had to focus a lot on why I got in the position of being up 5-Love. I think I backed off a little bit, and I think she started playing better.

I just knew that I was going to have to try to put some pressure on her early in the game just to kind of also make her aware of the situation. All of a sudden it's 5-4 and she feels like she has to hold that game. So just really trying to swing at the ball, make sure I was moving my feet, and put as much pressure on her as quickly as possible.

Q. You mentioned the different types of challenging players you have faced. I know it's part of tennis and your experience, but what's the challenge of playing different styles constantly and having to adapt to them? How difficult is that?

MADISON KEYS: I think that's actually my favorite part about tennis is that it's never the same typically. So to have to go from Yulia who -- sorry, that's my grandparents calling me (smiling).

Like to go from Yulia, who is just going to make me play a million balls, to playing Ostapenko, who is going to hit twice as hard as I can, and then have to play Iga, it's just all, like I said, it's my favorite part about tennis. Just constantly trying to figure out how your natural game style matches up against them, and then trying to figure out the one or two things you will have to add or do differently than normal just to play them.

Q. Do your grandparents call you after all your matches?

MADISON KEYS: All of the time (smiling). Sometimes it's like 35 seconds after the match. They are, like, Why didn't you answer?

I was, like, I was busy, I'm sorry. I'll call you later (smiling).



Q. After you beat Ostapenko, you were told you were going to play Iga, you gave the sarcastic thumbs up, and, like, well, we will see what happens. What was your preparation like? What was not the journey but like your mindset from kind of that moment of, okay, I'm going to play the most dominant player in the sport at the moment to then taking the court today? Seemed like you were very free, the arm was live, you looked really relaxed out there.

MADISON KEYS: I'm going to be totally honest. After I got two games. I was, like, Okay, it's better than last time. It's fine (smiling).

Honestly, that really just made me relax, but I think also this is the first time we have played on a faster court, so I definitely felt more comfortable with the conditions just from the start. I think I settled in pretty quickly.

Just having that confidence of I have done well here, beaten some really great players here, and I really like these courts and how they play, so I'm just going to really lean into that and see what happens. Then I think I obviously gained a lot of confidence as the match went on.

Q. Regarding the conditions, Iga said she hates the balls. Wondering what you think...

MADISON KEYS: It's like my favorite ball (smiling). I mean, it's what we practice with all of the time. The US Open Regular Duty is my favorite ball.

Q. Why?

MADISON KEYS: It starts pretty fast, and I think it's one of those balls that actually stays pretty consistent throughout until ball change. They actually, in my opinion, most of the time they actually get a little bit smaller. They don't get as fluffy, so they never really slow down, which is great for me and in my opinion, but, I mean, I can see why she doesn't like these.

Q. Just on Rybakina next, you will go from playing a slam champion to No. 1 to a reigning slam champion...

MADISON KEYS: Great.

Q. ...who you beat on clay a few months ago in a very exciting match. Talk about that challenge of her game, and also what your reaction was seeing her win Wimbledon.

MADISON KEYS: Well, I wasn't surprised when she won Wimbledon. I think our match at Roland Garros was, in my

opinion, some of the highest level. I mean, until the tiebreaker, there was like two points in the tiebreaker I thought her level dropped a little bit. I wasn't surprised seeing a fast, sunny grass court, she was thriving.

It's obviously going to be a tough match. She's going to like the fast courts just as much as I am. She's obviously gained more confidence after winning that and having that big opportunity for herself.

So, I mean, it's going to be really tough. I haven't gotten to see her play here, so, I mean, I'd lie if I say I'm going to watch it. I'm going to have Georgi watch it and tell me what to do tomorrow.

Q. How much do you watch tennis these days?

MADISON KEYS: I actually watch it a lot. I have been a little bit bummed, because a lot of the matchups I have wanted to watch have happened when I have been playing, so I have been missing it. I actually had to force myself to turn it off last night, because I needed to go to sleep.

There was still a lot of tennis until the very early hours of the morning. It's pretty much all we have on in the summer.

Q. Do you think there is a style of play that prefers these Wilson balls to I guess other ones? Or is it like everyone has their own preference?

MADISON KEYS: I think everyone probably has their own preference, but I also think that a lot of it has to do with the conditions. I think like the Dunlop balls, in my opinion, the ones we are playing on clay with, they started super fast but then got very dead very quickly. So I hated that, just because they felt so extreme.

But to me, I think part of the reason I like this Wilson ball is because it seems to stay so consistent. I feel like I'm not all of a sudden new balls and sending it out of the stadium.

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