

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Saturday, 19 September 2020

Roma, Italia

Karolina Pliskova

Press Conference



INTERNAZIONALI
BNL D'ITALIA

BNP PARIBAS

K. PLISKOVA/E. Mertens

6-3, 3-6, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You started strong, finished strong. How are you feeling in the clay at the minute? Leading into the French Open, could this be the year that you get that first Grand Slam?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I don't know which year it can be. For sure there is a chance. But still I would stay in Rome at this time.

I think I played great match. Even the second set I think there was some good moments. Of course I was a break up, so I could definitely went the second set as well. But just started way too strong in the third, and I think definitely was maybe one of the best matches of course of this season, but it's not so difficult because there was not many matches.

I felt great. Especially the first set I think was maybe one of my best sets what I have played on clay ever.

Q. Marketa was telling us about how you all played together during the lockdown and you had a couple of pink and black teams or something like that. Can you tell me about that and how that worked during the lockdown, and if you think that's one of the reasons you are all having such success this week?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: She told you, so I don't have to say anymore, no? (Smiling.) It was basically what she said. We were on the same team so there is not much to talk about.

Q. She didn't tell me you were on the same team, so there you go.

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: We didn't play each other.

No, it was great. We had some matches there, so of course it's a little different, these kind of exhibitions than

official matches, but still better than nothing.

We had a lot of fun. You know, just seeing these players and just to be somehow with them and just to practice in those long, six or five months which we were home I think is just great.

I played with Marketa couple times, not in this lockdown but couple times on tour, maybe two or maybe one, I'm not sure. I think Miami last time we met.

She's a strong opponent, especially on clay. She can play quite ugly game on clay. It's semifinals, still kind of preparation for Paris. If I play like today I think I should not be worried.

Q. How long were you all playing together during the lockdown? Was it for a month or two, two months, three months?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I think it was between three, four months, but it was just four events, like during weekends, like two, three days. Not every weekend of every week, not every month. But I think there was two on clay and two on hard. I didn't play all of them. But just to get some matches was good.

Q. A question I always wanted to know about Olga Savchuk. What do you say she adds to your team, and why did you start working with her in the first place? Just curious.

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: First of all, we are great friends for last, many years. We have like practiced together couple times when she was still competing in doubles. We had some good matches in the past when she was still playing her singles.

I felt like over the last couple years she quite know me well. I think it's good to have also person like this in the team. It's a woman, so she can understand me a little bit easier than my guys in the team (smiling).

I think it's good combination to have, you know, like somebody who can still help with tennis, who can hit with you, but you can also chat about different things, not only about the professional things and practice.

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And because we know each other so well, I think it can, you know, work well and it can be just good for me. And to feel more relaxed if I'm away of home like for one month to have somebody like this, I think it's good. That's why I keep her.

Q. I wanted to know a bit more about your relationship with Marketa. When did you first meet her? Is there anything that worries you about her game going into the semifinal?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: No, there is nothing. The only worry which I have is myself (smiling). But not really scared from her.

But of course that doesn't mean she's not a good player and she cannot win these kind of matches. But I feel if I play like I should and like I can, I don't have to be worried.

I don't know her that well. I mean, this year we kind of get a little bit closer because of these exhibitions which we played, but before, we are practicing in different clubs. She's from Prague but different club than I practice, so we would never like really hit. She has different coaches and whatever.

I was actually never in the Fed Cup team when she was there. She's little younger, so we never met that much. This year we just got little closer. So we have good relationship, so hopefully it can continue after tomorrow's match, too.

Q. I have a question from Elise. Just wondered what you thought of her today.

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: (No audio)... amazing, definitely. As I said, I think I played a great match. But she really tried even in the first set where there was not much she could do, but she still fought. Also in the second set where I was up. Also in the third when it was 5-0, she still kept the belief, which I believe that's why she wins a lot of matches because she's so patient and somehow so positive and still fighting. So I think that's her big weapon.

And of course she can play good tennis. I know she has been playing a lot of matches lately now in the last couple weeks, so you could just see she's feeling the ball quite well. You know, she has great backhand.

I feel like she's playing quite smart on the court, so definitely not an easy match with her.

Q. What did you tell yourself when you left for the locker room after losing that second set that maybe you should have won? What did you tell yourself?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: In tennis there is no "should," because we play till the last point, which to have 3-2, it doesn't mean that -- it's still quite far away. Even if I would make that game on 4-2, it was still quite far away of making the match.

I thought I played great set and a half, but of course she's a great player too, so she played some good shots and she made it difficult for me end of the second set. But I just changed my clothes, and I came back to the game which I was playing the first set, which worked.

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