

# Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Thursday, 13 May 2021

Roma, Italia

## Karolina Pliskova

Press Conference

K. PLISKOVA/V. Zvonareva

7-5, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Can you talk through the match against Vera. She's obviously had a fantastic tournament. A bit of a tricky one to get through.**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Yeah, I mean, we played once in Moscow. It was horrible match for me. I think I did one game. Has to be like two or three years ago.

I think she's a big fighter. No matter how long she didn't play, I think she's now back at certain level, which is quite difficult to beat. She doesn't give you much more free, which you can see the players she's beating now. She's quite solid, doing well. She won here a couple matches. She beat Petra, which is like super great victory for her.

Yeah, definitely I had to win that match because she's not going to give anything for free. That's what I know. Also I remember from, like, the past how she played. She's moving very well. I mean, for her age and how long she was not playing, she was not around for a while, I think she's playing great tennis.

I was quite happy with my performance today.

**Q. Your level has been getting better and better as the season has gone on. Obviously with your success in Rome over the last few years, is there any coincidence with your level rising, things have come together here in Rome to make a quarter?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I think there are still tournaments which, like in Stuttgart I'm feeling well, I always play good matches there. Of course, I won in the past. Madrid was never my tournament (smiling). There are some weeks where I just feel better no matter in which situation I am, in which shape I am. I think this is one of them.

Since I think last four years, I did one quarters, one final, I won once, now back in quarters. Yeah, last couple years



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I'm doing quite well here.

Yeah, I think the tournaments where I obviously had success in the past I'm always, like, feeling much better and more confident.

**Q. In general with this tournament, physically, mentally, how have you been feeling throughout the week so far?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Physically I'm doing great I think. Of course, couple of tough matches, three-setters, which I won earlier on clay. I think it kind of helped me to get some confidence, also to play some long matches which I'm able to win. Was not lucky, but in the beginning of the year I lost couple tight matches which doesn't help.

But I think now things are much, much better. My game is much better. Mentally I'm always good. I'm always the same.

It really helps that we can go for a couple hours outside here. I think that helps to everybody just to feel a bit more freedom, just to get outside of the bubble for a while, not to see always the same people or your room.

Yeah, quite happy.

**Q. How much does it feel like things are slowly returning to normalcy? Still very far away, but it seems closer.**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Doesn't feel that far away actually for now. Only the restaurants now we cannot really go. Really to me it feels incredible this week just to be able to go outside, especially here in this city where there's so much to see. You can just like walk. Even I don't have to go to restaurant. I think it's much, much better.

It's only two hours, but still you have that feeling. Maybe I don't go every day for two hours outside, but if I want I can go. It's not like you cannot just leave this hotel.

I think it helps. Also you don't have to see the same people every time. It starts to be tough, believe me, like after couple months to always be in the same circuit, breakfast, lunch, dinner, always the same people. Starts to be like a bit mentally tough.

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**Q. Looking ahead, Kerber took the first set, but who knows. You'll play either Kerber or Ostapenko. Talk about both those opponents.**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Of course Ostapenko I played couple weeks ago. It was great match. For some reason she's always playing great against me. I guess she likes the speed, big matches. I think she's still able to play very good level. She's able to beat some top players no matter that she's not really consistent.

Kerber, I don't think we played for a while. I actually don't remember our last meeting. Of course, we had lot of meetings.

Yeah, I think the plan is clear for both of the players because I know them so well. Not going to be many surprises.

Both are like extremely good players. But everybody's different. Ostapenko is super aggressive. Kerber is more like passive. I need to be in charge of those points there. But excited about this match.

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