

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Danielle Collins

Press Conference

D. COLLINS/I. Swiatek

6-1, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Danielle, congratulations. A tough opponent and a very strong performance from you today. What do you think gave you an advantage on court?

DANIELLE COLLINS: I mean, I feel like I went out and, after losing to Iga so many times, you obviously learn from those experiences, matchups.

In my mind I was kind of like, well, even though the last couple times we've played she's beaten me, I've played some of my best tennis in those matches. So that gave me confidence.

Then just learning from those situations, executing my game style and being a little bit more accurate than the times before.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. It felt very tense around the court as the second set got closer and closer. What was your feeling as you were getting closer to the win?

DANIELLE COLLINS: Yeah, I think anytime you get off to a start like I this, winning the first set pretty quickly, the fans want to see more tennis.

Obviously I was playing someone from Europe, so I think naturally there would be a few more fans that are here to support Iga. That's fair.

Yeah, I think it just kind of helped raise the intensity from both sides, which was great to see. It was a fun environment to play in overall, honestly.

Q. Iga's record lately sort of speaks for itself. As someone who has played her a lot, did you find anything different about her game that was more attack-able and vulnerable today than it has been in the past?



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DANIELLE COLLINS: Yeah, I think there's definitely some things that stand out. Yeah, we all know where I stand with certain things. So I don't think we need -- I don't intend to visit those areas of her game or criticize what she's doing, so... This isn't the forum to do that.

Q. Can I just ask you what your focus was coming in in terms of what you wanted to accomplish in terms of how you wanted to play? What were your priorities?

DANIELLE COLLINS: Yeah, my priority today was to go out and be consistent with the shots that I was hitting. Obviously with my game style, I play a pretty aggressive game style. Sometimes that can go one way or another. It can look really great and flashy, and other times you can miss some shots.

But I think having the confidence and trusting myself in those big moments to go after it, to trust my athleticism and to really, yeah, just like not be afraid to go after my shots in those big moments I think was key.

Q. How are you finding the clay is playing here?

DANIELLE COLLINS: Yeah, I mean, I have always enjoyed playing in Rome. I think the court that I played on today is a little bit faster than some of the other courts on the grounds, which is good for my game.

I feel like for some reason I've missed a lot of clay court seasons throughout my career because of health challenges, injuries, this and that. It is one of my favorite surfaces to play on. I did win a title on clay in Palermo.

It's a part of the season I really do enjoy because I do think the clay is so special. It's kind of nice on the body, as well - I'm not going to lie - compared to the hard courts.

I'm just really embracing getting to get these matches on the clay. I really wish we had, like, a longer clay court season.

Q. You won without making 50% of your first serves. What do you think it was that you were doing on your second serve that made that particularly effective?

DANIELLE COLLINS: Yeah, it's like sometimes you need a warm-up before the real serve, right? You just need to



... when all is said, we're done.®

get one fresh rap because you really go after it, it guess. I don't know. I think about that sometimes, too. I really am not sure.

I think sometimes I'm, like, missing some of the serves so close. Sometimes maybe just going for a little bit too much on the target, trying to really get it in one spot, but it's like too close to the line, and that's why I end up missing it by a little bit.

The same sometimes missing it where it just clips the net. I felt like Iga was doing that today on her serve, as well. It was contagious. I couldn't figure out why both of us were not making a lot of first serves.

We were both hitting pretty hard, effective second serves, so I think that plays off.

Growing up, I watched a lot of Elena Dementieva. Elena Dementieva made a career for herself not making many first serves. That was a really tough shot for her. She had so many other special parts of her game that made her the player she was. She was athletic.

Sometimes when I have a bad serving day I think about Elena Dementieva and all of the things she was able to achieve even when the serve or first serve wasn't working well for her.

It just shows you you can have one area of your game not be effective one day, but if you have other skills and talent, you can apply that and really achieve some great things, so...

She's inspiring to me at times (smiling).

Q. I love an Elena Dementieva name drop in a 2025 press conference.

DANIELLE COLLINS: I loved her. She was one of my favorite players to watch.

Q. One of the benefits of these two-week tournaments is you have a few days to get into things. How have you been spending your time off?

DANIELLE COLLINS: For me, like, coming over to Europe is one of the most difficult places to get adjusted with the time. I almost think going to Australia I just faster, which is so weird because the time change is so much more extreme. But for some reason in Europe the six-hour time change is just awkward enough to where it can really throw me off.

I always have to give myself a little bit extra time - like a

week (laughter) - to just get acclimated to my sleep, have a few days of really crappy sleep, a few days getting my feet under myself, yeah, not feeling jet lagged.

I try to get here like a week in advance. That gives me some time to do some fun things. It's been nice to be able to have some extra time on the courts, as well, to get prepared.

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