

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Friday, 8 May 2026

Roma, Italia

Madison Keys

Mixed Zone

M. KEYS/P. Stearns

4-6, 6-4, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How did it feel out there? Does it feel like all that's kind of behind you physically?

MADISON KEYS: Yeah, felt good obviously to get the win today. Madrid was rough, so... Actually playing tennis again.

I think a match like today definitely had some thoughts where I got sick in Madrid, now am going to lose the first match here? It sucks. I think being able to regroup and get the win was really important today.

Q. How miserable was that experience?

MADISON KEYS: It was so bad. Guys, I puked like 20 times in a 15-hour period. Yeah, it was really miserable. Felt terrible for a couple of days. It sucks because as much as the first day obviously sucks, the recovery period of being so tired, you can't eat, all the things. Took a couple of days.

Hopefully it's behind me (laughter).

Q. It sounded like whatever it was, it was really bad but the recovery was quicker, or...

MADISON KEYS: Yeah, I will say I think it was like the first two days were miserable. After that it was okay. It's just having to get yourself back into training, and eating food again is the hardest part. I saw Coco. She was like, I feel so much better. I was like, Is that youth? I don't feel better, and I had it before you did (laughter).

Q. How close to good do you feel now?

MADISON KEYS: I feel fine now.

Q. I imagine it takes a bit out of you.



MADISON KEYS: Yeah, I've had enough time I think at this point to get back to it. I've also been eating like a lot of gelato, trying to recoup. I've heard that's really good for you, yeah (smiling). You know, fat, calcium is important, dairy. All the important macros.

Q. What is it like being the camera-women for a million American players?

MADISON KEYS: It was very fun, as chaotic as it looked. Jess was kind of leading all of us to the place. She was like, I feel like I need a (indiscernible) to work on. I was like herding cows.

It was super fun. It is quite funny because we've had a couple of people who were so bummed that they missed it. Then can we have Coco who is like, Where is my money (laughter)?

Q. She's the wealthiest sports women, highest paid.

MADISON KEYS: You know, she has given us some free promos. She threw our name out, she threw our podcast name out. Our intern was like, Does she except Kohl's Cash?

I was like, Maybe we buy you dinner next time.

Q. A question on Kathy Rinaldi stepping down, what she's meant to you, not just the BJK Cup but...

MADISON KEYS: Kathy is amazing. I mean, even before Kathy had a leadership role as big as it was, she was just always around. She was always a coach. I've known Kathy for, I mean, probably close to 20 years at this point. She's been such a cheerleader.

It was always so nice, it was like no matter where you were in the world, you would hear that clap and there's Kathy, she's got me, we'll be fine.

I'm really sad to see she's stepping down and she'll no longer be around. She is tennis. She is U.S. women's tennis, so...

I'm sure and hoping she'll still be involved.

Q. As someone part of the players council, what do

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you make of the boycott, Aryna and Jannik in particular speaking out?

MADISON KEYS: I was a little surprised. To be totally honest, I was so not tuned in. I kept getting text messages, Are you going to boycott? In Paris? What are you talking about? What's happening?

It's great to see the top players speaking out, taking initiative, being vocal about the issues that have always been issues but continue to be issues.

I think it's really important that players have a voice and they get a seat at the table to actually make some of those decisions.

Other than that, I don't have any further comments. But it is very great to see just how unified the players are.

Q. You've been around for a while. These discussions have happened for a long time. How optimistic are you that this could be a time change? Are you a cynical person and...

MADISON KEYS: I think this is the most unified I've seen the players where there's genuinely a large group of people who have said, I think now is the time to actually do something. We kind of need to stand up for it. Things need to change.

I'm cautiously optimistic. I mean, obviously you hope that it never gets to the point of actually having to do anything radical. Just the fact that all the players seem to be very unified, have one voice, has been very nice.

Q. In your experience, I would think there's a difference between trying to figure out and work through those issues when it's targeted towards tour tournaments or WTA, ATP, versus slams. Is that what your thought is? Is it harder to get movement in one sector versus the other?

MADISON KEYS: I think tennis in general, it's kind of hard to move the needle on anything. There's so many moving parts and pieces. Obviously the tours are owned by the players and the tournament. You have to be in agreement for anything to happen.

Then the slams, it's very confusing because it's the ITF, but it's also individual federations and things like that. So I just think that the way that tennis is set up, it makes it hard to have any sort of changes.

Q. (Question about betters in the crowd.)

MADISON KEYS: I haven't noticed personally. I have seen it happen. I think there needs to be more done about it.

I know that it's hard obviously because it's a massive crowd, how are you going to actually patrol that? But I think there's so many rules around how we are around betting. Like, we cannot be involved in it at all in any way, shape or form. We take it so seriously. We're constantly dealing with it.

I think for it to be in such a public way, that it's very obvious how it is, I think something needs to be done about it.

Q. Can you remember what you've seen in the matches?

MADISON KEYS: Just like very vocal I think, in a not fun spectator tennis way. I've always just kind of been the person that I'm not a fan of sports betting in general. I think it kind of brings out the worst in people. I think to have a little bit more protection around it and for the players is really important.

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