

# BNP Paribas Open

Friday, March 8, 2024

## Angelique Kerber

Press Conference



A. KERBER/J. Ostapenko

5-7, 6-3, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Angie, how does it feel to get a win like that under your belt?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: Of course it feels good to play a match like this and to win against such a top player. I mean, she won two titles this year already.

Yeah, it's nice, and that gives me for sure a lot of confidence for the next matches.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. It's been a slow start to your return, but now at Indian Wells you've won two matches in a row. How is your confidence? How are you feeling? Do you love the conditions here?**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: I mean, I love the place. I played always good here. I have good memories.

You know, the conditions are sometimes really tough, especially with the rain, with the wind, with, yeah, with everything.

But for me it's most important that I feel good. I came here a little bit earlier to practice on-site. And yeah, two matches that I won already and it feels good. That gives me for sure a lot of confidence, especially because, yeah, the start was a little bit slow. I mean, it's always not easy to, you know, to come back after such a long break.

But yeah, again, I played good tennis today, and that shows me that I'm, yeah, that I can play with the top players again.

**Q. Angie, you said obviously it's nice to have a win like this, but if you could put into context of how important this is for you as this comeback continues for you, and what it does for your confidence to beat somebody like Ostapenko.**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: Of course it is really important match, especially after the comeback, after, yeah, that I played not so well in Linz actually a few weeks ago, and now to coming back here and I'm showing myself actually that hard work pays off, that I just have to make the transition from the practice court to the match court.

This is what I felt before this tournament, that I need a lot of matches, especially matches like this, playing against the top players, and that I have the feeling that I'm strong again in important moments.

This is completely different to the practice sessions. You know, you go on court, you have pressure, you are getting tired like I get as well in this match, and this is something you only can get when you play matches like this.

So that's why the match is really, really important for me also, when looking ahead to the next tournaments or the next matches, and yeah, it shows me that I'm on the right way.

**Q. How is this all working with the child? Are you traveling with your baby? The logistics, who takes care of things? You talked about the transition from -- I don't know what you said, but I'm thinking more of, like, transition you go through on a daily basis from mother to tennis player.**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: Transition, I mean from the practice to the match. Practice and match is different, yes.

**Q. Yeah, I'm just thinking about the larger transition like lots of working moms go through. How does it work for you?**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: It's not easy, especially you have to get used to this different situation now, but I think we get used to it more and more.

She's traveling with me, and, you know, it's just about organization. I think that's the most important thing. I mean, you have to be really flexible, as well, and to really make a good schedule for the day. We are always doing the schedule at the end of the day for the next day and just

day by day.

Yeah, I think that's the most important thing.

**Q. Does your daughter cooperate with that schedule? If she is, she's like the first one ever.**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: I think she's fine with the schedule (smiling). I think we are really lucky that she can sleep everywhere. She is, yeah, not a child who is, like, crying all the time, so she's really like calm.

I think she's enjoying it as well. But of course it is sometimes you have nights where you will not get so much sleep, but it's all worth it, yeah.

**Q. Obviously you still want to be engaged in that competition and that feeling of being on a court, but what gives you the inspiration? Is it a case of looking back at some of those past trophies at the majors and things like that, or is it your daughter that gives you the inspiration, or is it just yourself?**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: This question I heard a lot, why I'm back and what gives me the motivation. You know, for me, the biggest motivation is the love for the sport. I mean, I love to compete, you know, being out there today as well, to having this crowd, to having the emotions, this gives me everything.

Now, to having my daughter on my side, it's even more inspiring for me to having her, and there's something bigger than tennis as well, which I learned, and it's not tennis anymore, it's her. And having the combination of doing something I love and having her on my side, this is the most inspiration for me.

This is the biggest motivation as well for me to coming back to having this fight to practicing a lot to working a lot and dealing with all the stuff, sometimes also different stuffs, you know, with traveling, jet lags, less sleep, all the stuff.

But yeah, I mean, I love the sport, the competing. I will try to do it as long as possible. I think my heart will tell me when it's over, but I don't know when, yeah (smiling).

**Q. There were some tough moments at United Cup where you seemed maybe a little rusty, struggling. Wonder if you had doubts in those moments about what you were trying to do. Can you talk about the process what got you from there where you were struggling to where you are now.**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: It is really a process. At the

Australian Open, also United Cup, I just played against the best players, you know. It was just for me a cold start, just putting me in the cold water.

But I really enjoyed it. We won it, I won the most important match there where Sascha lost, so I won the match against Ajla. But the whole thing that gives me, like I said before, the emotions on court, that is why I'm back to enjoying tennis, to seeing all the people back.

You know, but I know it was a process. There I was not feeling 100%, because matches are so different, also physically, mentally. And now I took also a little bit time to practice again with, yeah, the experience I had in Australia. Now I'm just looking forward to having matches and playing as many matches as possible and looking like just from day to day and hoping that I can improve and playing on my highest level again.

**Q. Do you have a process from going from home life on the road to, okay, I need to lock in, I have a big match today against a top player? I don't know if she's top-10 but certainly close to it or capable of playing top 10. Is there something you do to switch off one side of your brain and switch on the other side of your brain?**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: I try when I step on-site to switch, like, my professional, like, my tennis player, but when I'm out of the site, I just turn my life to, you know, to being a mom and just trying to forgetting about this, to really enjoying every moment, especially here in Indian Wells.

But this is something I or we try to do. When I'm here, I'm just focusing on what I have to do, and when I'm out, yeah, it's out (smiling).

**Q. Just wondering if you changed anything technically from your earlier matches? Like, did you see anything that was new to you that you changed coming into Indian Wells that has made this a lot more successful?**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: It's just I have to be more aggressive. I think I have to take the match in my hands. This is what I learned. But also the years before, it's just a process. I know that I have to go for it, I have to take my chances, and, yeah, just trying to doing by my own and not, you know, hoping that the opponent is making a mistake.

**Q. In your memoir you write a little bit about the jump from realizing what it means to train as a professional and to put in that extra work and what that did for your career a few years ago. Are you back at training at that level, or are you ramping up to where you used to be?**

ANGELIQUE KERBER: My practice is a little bit different than it was before. I really try to just practicing once a day, but doing it more intense, you know, just to going out, playing intense, practicing intense, and just exactly knowing what I want to practice. So this is a little bit different than few years ago, yeah.

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