

BNP Paribas Open

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Belinda Bencic

Press Conference



B. BENCIC/T. Maria

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THE MODERATOR: Belinda, pretty straightforward scoreline. Your thoughts on your performance.

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, very happy with the win. Of course it was challenging today with the wind, but happy to be through. And, yeah, that's it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. So what is the secret to managing the wind like that when it's blowing? Is it particularly different, is this wind different from all other winds?

BELINDA BENCIC: I feel like it's different every day. I mean, I've been surprised a little bit, because almost every day that I practiced it was very windy. I think except yesterday, I think that was a little bit different. I didn't remember it being so windy here.

But, I think the secret is kind of to respect the wind and trying to play with it and not try to go for risky shots and just kind of playing a big target and working your legs hard, trying to stay in the rally and just playing smart.

Q. Did it affect the air at all? We're in the desert, so there's a lot of sand. I get it on my computer screen. What's it like to be running around out there? Is it on the court?

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, I feel like it's been like that a little bit. Today I think was better, but I feel like -- I practiced on Friday, and my whole mouth was full of sand and it was just everywhere. It was really like a sandstorm.

I mean, it's just the way it is. You're not really thinking about it. I mean, it's normal. We are in the desert, so what do we expect (smiling)?

Q. You've won 14 of 18 matches this year, title in Abu Dhabi. Are you surprising yourself with this comeback from maternity leave?

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, a little bit, for sure. I definitely didn't anticipate the comeback being so successful and so early. But of course I'm going to take it. I'm very happy about it, and I feel like obviously it was a lot of hard work, you know, to make the comeback.

I feel like it helped me a lot to play some lower events last year late in the season, you know, to try to just start to play a little bit, see where my level is. Also, like, figure out everything, logistics, how I feel on the court. That gave us a little bit of a direction of what we can work on more before Australia. Then obviously very happy with the results right now.

Q. As a new mother, what are your thoughts on the maternity leave initiative announced today by the WTA?

BELINDA BENCIC: Well, of course I think it's a great thing. It's absolutely giving players the chance to not have to make such a hard decision. I think it makes their decision a little bit easier if they are looking for having a family and didn't have to decide so much if it's worth it.

Especially the lower-ranked players, I think it's important for them to have a guaranteed income so they don't have to worry about money when they're out for a year and a half and not stress about things.

So I think it's a great thing. Also, you know, that tennis is the first sport to do it for female athletes, so I hope it paves the way for other sports, as well.

Q. Playing Tatjana, who is maybe the most experienced mother on tour, toting around these kids for, I don't know, eight, nine, ten years or something. Is she someone you have talked about this with and strategized with? Do people go to her for advice?

BELINDA BENCIC: I mean, I have talked to her just because I know her and she's really a very, very nice person. I feel like the talk is just a little bit more like mother to mother and not really, like, strategizing or trying to figure it out.



So I think it's just anything. She was just telling me to be super relaxed about it and very spontaneous. And then I feel like your kids are the same, so you're obviously a real mother. She's, I think, an amazing mom, so it's really nice that she's on tour and managing everything so well.

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