

BNP Paribas Open

Monday, March 10, 2025

Madison Keys

Press Conference



M. KEYS/E. Mertens

6-2, 6-7, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Madison, your thoughts on the match today.

MADISON KEYS: Tough match today. I obviously don't think I played my best, but I think the reality is that you have matches like that, and being able to get the win just gives you the opportunity to have another match here and work on whatever was not working here today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Well done. After the match in the on-court interview, you referred to your first couple matches back as "interesting." Wonder what sticks out to you about this experience, the whole returning as a slam champion. Has it surprised you what you felt or what you've gone through at all?

MADISON KEYS: I don't think I'm surprised. It's just something different, you know, for the first time that I'm dealing with and trying to manage my own expectations. I think, you know, today obviously I don't think I played my best level, and I think that was more frustrating just because I'm starting to expect a little bit more of myself. So just trying to navigate that.

But, yeah, I mean, obviously it's a learning experience, and it's a good position to be in.

Q. I live here in the Valley, so I know how hot it can get here. How would you say the constant sunlight, the temperature, may have impacted you during the match today?

MADISON KEYS: I thought it was great. I love when it's warm and lively here. Growing up in Florida, I feel like obviously different heat, but very much enjoy playing in the heat. Days like today are very welcome.

Q. Just referring to what you just spoke about, about your expectations being a little bit higher, does that

refer specifically to being more consistent over time? Because obviously can't get much better than what happened in Australia.

MADISON KEYS: Yeah, I think it's just you start to expect a certain level from yourself. I think overall in Australia I played some really good tennis, and I think the further away from it you get, the more you kind of forget about the lulls of matches and the moments where you weren't playing great and you kind of just remember all of the really great, fun stuff.

So I think it's also just having a good grip on reality, and that sometimes as great as Australia was and all the wins that I got, there were still some moments in matches where I didn't play great or things got away from me. So just being really conscious of that.

Q. About your racquet, I wasn't in Australia, but I read some of the stuff you said about it. You didn't confirm whether it was lighter or not, but it seems like it's a lighter racquet, definitely more maneuverable. Can you talk a little bit more about that one more time, about what it's done for you and why you like?

MADISON KEYS: Yeah, it's not lighter. Same specs. Yeah, I think, for whatever reason, I just find it a little bit easier to kind of do things with it. I feel like I get more power, but I also can kind of control the ball and have a little bit more consistency and control, as well.

But, yeah, it's same specs.

Q. As you prepare for your next match, what would you say are some of the key things that you're going to be focusing on?

MADISON KEYS: I mean, I think after today, definitely hope to have a better serving day. I think today there were moments where I was playing really well and getting ahead, getting a lead, and then letting her back in and giving her the opportunity to get back into the match. I think just being a little bit cleaner as far as that goes.

Q. A question about Emma Navarro. She's kind of

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developing a reputation right now for someone who is really mentally tough, performing well in three-setters. Wonder if you could comment on her strengths in those type of matches.

MADISON KEYS: Emma is one of the grittiest players I think I have ever watched, and I got to watch her courtside at Billie Jean King Cup last year, and just kind of hearing her talk to herself and get herself through some tough matches and tough moments where she wasn't playing well was so impressive. I think it's one of her biggest weapons that she has.

I think you can never really count her out, and I think that's why she's able to do as well as she does.

Q. I'm wondering if you can talk about what it's like to go through those moments in matches where from minute to minute tennis can seem so easy, and then the next minute seems really hard, and sort of keeping yourself from your head exploding.

MADISON KEYS: It's definitely really frustrating. I think that it's almost more frustrating when it kind of swings from one extreme to another, where you're playing what I would say is pretty good tennis and solid tennis, and then just not the level that I wanted.

But I think that it's also kind of two sides to a coin where at least you still have those moments and glimpses of playing some good tennis, because I think if you can just kind of get back to that and then you know that there is still opportunities and chances within the match.

Q. Have you figured out any sort of rhyme or reason why it can come and go? Every player goes through it. I'm not singling you out.

MADISON KEYS: If I could figure that out, we wouldn't be having this conversation. (Smiling.)

Q. Just a big picture, your thoughts on having the courage to change, made a lot of changes to your game, maybe a lot of them were influenced by Bjorn, but has a change of perspective been really how you think about your evolution going forward?

MADISON KEYS: I think that it obviously takes a lot of courage to make changes. I think for a long time I was more stubborn about not making the changes, because I also felt like I didn't want to just search for answers. I felt like I had a lot of control over getting myself out of scenarios.

So I think there is a delicate balance, because you also

don't want to start switching things every time you lose three matches in a row, because then you're never going to have any consistency. And then I feel like you're always looking for answers outside of yourself.

So I definitely am very happy that I made a lot of the changes. But I think going forward, there is lots of discussions that go into it and making sure that you're wanting to make the changes for the right reasons.

Q. I just wanted to ask something a little off-topic. I remember being down in Orlando when you were down there with Jenny Brady, working hard to get your games where you wanted them. Jenny obviously came back and had that injury recurrence. How did you process that, having gone through that with her, and what do you think? Do you think about her situation much or where she's at and hopes for her to come back again?

MADISON KEYS: Jenny is one of my favorite people in the world, and I will always and continue to be her biggest cheerleader. I know she's working really hard to get healthy again and be back on the court.

I will be the constant reminder for her that if she gets back on the court, we're all screwed, because she's a phenomenal tennis player, and if she can be healthy, then she can do amazing things.

Q. The other day I think you sort of were adjusting to this first match back and everything, just getting into the rhythm of things. Did it start to feel more normal since that first match, and did today feel more normal, okay, I'm going about my job again?

MADISON KEYS: Yeah, I think so. And I think, you know, today is a day where you maybe didn't thrive out there, but, you know, part of the job is figuring out how to win matches when you're not playing well and kind of brings you back down to earth and gets you kind of back to reality.

Honestly, just really happy that I have another match here in a place where I haven't consistently done well here, so having gotten through that hurdle today while not playing well I think is a really big win.

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