

# BNP Paribas Open

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

## Madison Keys

Press Conference



M. KEYS/D. Vekic

4-6, 7-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Another tough three-setter. Tell us how you're feeling physically and your thoughts on the match.

MADISON KEYS: Feeling pretty good. I think Donna played really well at the beginning. I felt like I wasn't executing quite how I wanted to. Was really happy that I was able to kind of flip the script a little bit in the second set and kind of play a pretty solid third set.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. The tiebreaker, sort of déjà vu all over again a little bit with the tiebreaker, given what you went through in Australia? Were you drawing on any of that? I know you have been doing tiebreakers for, like, 15 years or something like that, but coming back the way you did.**

MADISON KEYS: No, didn't really think about Australia much in that breaker. Just really obviously getting down early in that tiebreaker, wanted to try and level it up as quickly as possible.

I felt like she was playing really well, and I felt like I kind of had to try to get ahead in the point a little bit sooner, so started going for a little bit more.

**Q. Are you having fun out there?**

MADISON KEYS: Yeah. I mean, it would probably be a little bit more fun if it was straight sets, but yeah, I'm really enjoying myself out there. Obviously just kind of riding the wave of momentum.

**Q. Do things feel a little bit different for you? This is your first event since Melbourne, and it is in the United States, so obviously there's going to be a bigger focus on you after Melbourne. So when you're on court, when you're wandering around, do things feel totally different?**

MADISON KEYS: I don't know if they feel different. It's obviously, like, a tournament in the States and being an American. Obviously I think there is probably a few more eyes on me, but I feel like at the same time, given winning the first slam of the year, eyes probably would have been on me anyways no matter where I was.

I just felt like it was more important to be really ready to be back on the court instead of trying to rush things, just to get the first tournament post-Australia out of the way.

**Q. After a tiebreak like you had, what's going through your mind on the changeover, resetting for the next set and refocusing?**

MADISON KEYS: I think I was just really focused today on trying to get off with a good start. I think sometimes after a close tiebreaker and winning the set and kind of having a little bit of, like, a surge of energy and everything, sometimes you can get almost a little bit too amped, and then all of a sudden, you're four points in and you haven't really made a ball.

So I just wanted to try to play really tough the first game and just try to get the thing that I was doing well in order to close out that set, just kind of starting off from the start with that.

**Q. What's the routine like out here for you? You have been coming here for a long time. Are there particular places, particular things you like to do? You mentioned you were staying at a hotel this year, might stay at a house next year. Is there sort of a set way you go about your business when you're in this part of the world?**

MADISON KEYS: I feel like it's kind of the same everywhere. I mean, off days there is coffee, practice, go back to the hotel, eat dinner. Kind of the same everywhere.

Yeah, I mean, it's obviously nice being here, and it's nice kind of having a car and you can drive around and see a little bit more of the city, but, I mean, all in all, I think it's kind of the same routine everywhere.



**Q. Being domestic, is it easier to either have friends and family come here and see you, or also just being in the same time zone that they can watch you and you communicate differently with people while you're playing the same time-zone tournament?**

MADISON KEYS: It's not really different for me. It's probably different for my friends and family where they can sleep.

My mom watches all of my matches no matter where I am in the world, so I think she's happier these weeks, because she doesn't have to wake up at 2:00 a.m.

Yeah, I mean, for me, it's all kind of all just the same all the time. It's just been my life for the last 16 years, and I am where I am, and if people can watch, great. If not, they can't.

I never really have a ton of friends or family physically come to the tournaments. Occasionally I'll have one or two. But I kind of like to have this be my job and kind of keep it separate. They can come occasionally -- well, sometimes (smiling). But yeah, I think more than anything, they all get to sleep and not have to set alarms all hours of the night.

**Q. Two random things. If you had to pick your favorite venue on the circuit, on the tour, what would that be? If you could pick up the telephone, so to speak, and talk to that 14-year-old kid who left the Quad Cities or maybe it's younger and went to Florida, what would you say about your journey and what you have accomplished?**

MADISON KEYS: I always really love playing in Charleston. It's one of my favorite places to play. I think the facility is phenomenal, but I just think the fans in Charleston, they're so fun and excited to be there.

I think I played my first time there when I was 14 or 15, and it's just lots of really great people, Bob and Eleanor, and so always really happy to go back there.

I think we ended up moving when I was 10, and for most people, everyone kind of thought that we were crazy that we were picking up and moving to Florida and that, you know, my parents and I thought that I could actually be a professional tennis player.

So I think more than anything, just kind of trust your gut. Good things typically happen when you just trust yourself and you believe in yourself.

**Q. My understanding is that you got your family to move to Florida. How did you manage to do that?**

MADISON KEYS: I mean, I didn't actually. I was 10. So I didn't actually dictate the move (smiling).

I told my parents that I would like to play professional tennis, and we had been doing summer camps at Evert Tennis Academy, and I was a little bit behind, especially fundamentally, and John kind of sat my parents down and said, Look, if you want to do this, you need to do it right.

They did. So we picked up and we moved.

**Q. My colleagues and I on BNP Open Radio, which we'd love to have you on as a guest, we have been having a discussion about whether good friends can also be serious rivals. Chrissie Evert in there yesterday. She was talking about the relationship with Martina even when they were playing. What do you think? Do you think it's possible easily? Or is it an effort for close friends to be rivals?**

MADISON KEYS: I think that it's definitely possible. I think that there's probably matches where you have played a close friend and neither one of you played great tennis at the same time, but I think at the same time, some of my best matches have also been against really close friends.

So I think it's possible. I think when you throw in the extra element of being incredibly close, it's kind of a 50/50 chance on if you kind of see some of those extra nerves bubble up during the matches.

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