

# BNP Paribas Open

Thursday, March 5, 2026

## Venus Williams

Press Conference



D. PARRY/V. Williams

6-3, 6-7, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Even though it's always a bummer to lose, tennis is a game. And even though it's part of your livelihood, is it ever fun even though you lose?**

VENUS WILLIAMS: Oh, it's always so fun. Of course losing isn't fun, but it's great to play in front of a home crowd. They were behind me the whole way, and that was really fun for that.

**Q. I wanted to ask you a little bit about your current, sort of, position in sort of the locker room and on tour as now that you're back traveling. I just talked to Lilli Tagger who said she practiced with you. She practiced with you here and Italy, as well. Do you see yourself as almost sort of -- "mother hen" is the wrong word -- but you're sort of guiding younger players or working as a mentor for younger players by being on tour?**

VENUS WILLIAMS: No.

**Q. I was talking to Taylor Townsend earlier today, and she said it's only really in the last couple of years she's been able to become her authentic self on the tour, that earlier in her career she found it hard to find her way. Reflecting back, when you first came on the tour, did you experience that yourself?**

VENUS WILLIAMS: No (smiling).

**Q. I know you're not in the weeds of the tour anymore, but I'm wondering how much you have come across Jessica Pegula who has taken on this new role with the tour calendar sort of review and if you see her as someone who is sort of becoming more of a leader on the tour, as you did, as you got older?**

VENUS WILLIAMS: Yeah, I don't know much, but I think it's a natural progression for someone else to take the lead.

Very happy to hear that she's stepping up.

**Q. How would you assess just where your game is right now? You know, there were times where it looks like you've got some magic left in your racquet, and then there are other times where you looked overmatched. How would you assess personally where you're at with the way you're playing and your game in general?**

VENUS WILLIAMS: Well, I think today is not the kind of day that you want to assess. The conditions are impossible. Also, my match in Austin the conditions were impossible. I have played the last two matches in very difficult conditions.

In Austin I refused to relent and change my game and I lost very quickly. Today I tried to adjust. It's not easy. You can't trust anything that you do out there.

So you should get out there and play in that wind and you'll tell me too if you can create some magic or if you can be perfect or not.

**Q. Will we see you and Serena play together this year, do you think?**

VENUS WILLIAMS: I think you should definitely ask her that.

**Q. If you could leave a message to the fans right now that have cheered you on in this game, what would it be?**

VENUS WILLIAMS: Love you guys. Thank you for the support.

I have amazing fans that believe in me, and it's fun to play for them, or even in practice when they come out. It's very thrilling. Yeah, today was a tough one, but that's sport and that's life, and I'll take what I need to from it.

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