

Billie Jean King Cup

Wednesday, 9 November 2022

Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Emirates Arena

Team Belgium

Captain Johan van Herck

Kirsten Flipkens

Elise Mertens

Press Conference

FLIPKENS-MERTENS/Kuzmova-Mihalikova

6-0, 6-3

Team Slovakia - 2

Team Belgium - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. Johan, a pretty emphatic doubles win. How important was it to end today on a high?

CAPTAIN van HERCK: I think it was very important. It was our only chance to stay alive. We had to make it 2-1 after the two lost singles.

I think both girls here next to me did a tremendous job. I think that was the only reaction we could give, which we needed. It's always nice, it gives a totally different feeling coming in here now even though we lost, but we still have everything to play for tomorrow.

Q. And you were competing today without your top two singles players. How much of a challenge was that?

CAPTAIN van HERCK: Yeah, but at the end of the day, I think you have to make a decision as a team to who you are going to play. It was quite clear that Elise to play singles was not an option.

We have discussed this, and I think it's already amazing to see the level she gets being here, arriving yesterday evening at 10:30 at the hotel, and see the attitude of what she brings on the court, I think it's already pretty amazing.



**BILLIE JEAN
KING CUP**

2022 FINALS GLASGOW

BY > GAINBRIDGE

And obviously Alison, only played two matches since Wimbledon, then you have to make a choice and we made a choice today to make two players play that have been playing a lot, that have been having good results.

That's why we put them on the court together, and now I think obviously for tomorrow we're gonna put again all cards on the table and then see which is the best solution to play tomorrow.

Q. Elise, how are you physically after that match? How are you feeling?

ELISE MERTENS: I'm good, I'm good. No, I'm feeling well. I'm feeling good. It was a long trip, but I'm dedicated to play for Belgium. I'm dedicated to be here, because otherwise I wouldn't be here.

But yeah, even though we lost today, we still have a chance. I think we have to look at on the positive side, like okay, we still have a chance. It will be a tough one, but as today, it's always tough, but in tennis everything can change very quickly, also in a positive way.

Q. Elise, you mentioned how much you love playing for Belgium. It must be quite frustrating that you probably would have played singles today in other circumstances, but you know you have ended up in a situation where you've arrived here less than 24 hours ago. That must be quite annoying for you?

ELISE MERTENS: Oh, no, it's not annoying. I think it's very positive, actually. It's very positive that I played the WTA Finals. It's positive that I won, because it would be very annoying if I lost the final, and it would be very annoying if I lost the semis and I had to stay alternate there.

So I'm very happy that I won the finals, and I'm very proud that I can be here. I have all the trust in the other players. Even though we lost today, I think we still can learn a lot from today for tomorrow.

Q. What time exactly did you arrive in Glasgow?

ELISE MERTENS: I had...

CAPTAIN van HERCK: 9:47.

ELISE MERTENS: 9:47, yeah.

CAPTAIN van HERCK: It was the back, two wheels on the plane...

Q. Did you manage to sleep last night?

ELISE MERTENS: I did manage to sleep, yeah, yeah. The team prepared a lot of things for me for the night, a lot of things, recuperation stuff. No, I managed to sleep seven hours.

Q. I think the ITF and WTA have said that they will try and address this next year, but presumably...

ELISE MERTENS: Yeah, that would be good. That would be good. That would be nice (smiling).

Q. Because I think you have obviously been the most affected having played on Monday and then having to play Wednesday morning.

ELISE MERTENS: Well, I'll try to look at it in a positive way, because I can't change anything at this moment. Yeah, of course it could be very differently.

But, you know, I won the WTA Finals in doubles, so that's kind of cool (smiling). As I said, I hold the trust in the other players. They are playing well.

Of course one day is not another. We lost today, can be another day tomorrow, and we'll start with a fresh...

CAPTAIN van HERCK: Start.

ELISE MERTENS: ...start.

Q. Would you be available for singles tomorrow potentially?

ELISE MERTENS: I mean, we still have to discuss that. We just came off court, and as a team, we have to discuss it with everyone who is ready to play, who is maybe less ready to play, but, yeah, it's definitely an option.

Q. Could you just talk us through the details? Was it one flight, a couple of flights?

ELISE MERTENS: Three. Three.

Q. How did you feel this morning? Were you

concerned about the impact of...

ELISE MERTENS: So when I played the finals, I started at like 5:30, and it was a little bit longer than expected because I had my flight at 10:00. I was still doing media and everything. It was 8:15. I was, like, Oh, my God, I'm not going to make it.

Yeah, 8:15. We rushed. I barely showered. You smelled it yesterday evening.

CAPTAIN van HERCK: I could tell. (Laughter.)

ELISE MERTENS: Yeah, we went to the airport. I was there like 5 to 9:00. They said, Yeah, we have four minutes for your bags. One bag on the scale. Two minutes. Oh, my God.

Yeah, we ran, my mom actually, ran to the gate and we kind of made it. And then three flights, went to Madrid, went to London, and then to Glasgow.

But, you know, it's part of the journey. Yeah, I would be frustrated if I lost, so we won so I was, like, This is all good.

No, I slept like seven hours. Little nap in between. But, yeah, it's quite a journey.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports