

Billie Jean King Cup

Thursday, 10 November 2022

Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Emirates Arena

Team Australia

Ajla Tomljanovic

Press Conference



**BILLIE JEAN
KING CUP**

2022 FINALS GLASGOW

BY > GAINBRIDGE

A. TOMLJANOVIC/E. Mertens

4-6, 6-4, 3-0 [Ret.]

Team Australia - 2

Team Belgium - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Can you just talk through that match for us? Elise obviously came out playing amazingly and really great fight back. How proud are you of that, and also, what was the key getting back into it?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Yeah, she came out firing, serving great. But the biggest thing, she kept me on my toes with mixing it up a lot. I really felt very out of balance today up to, you know, even -- yeah, the whole match I just struggled to find my rhythm, my game.

But the key was just to not give up. I think this week that's what it's all about. It's about finding ways and never thinking it's over. I thought to myself that set and 4-1, I was like, you know, that game I lost, that was good tennis, and I'm almost worried that it's a little too late to figure it out but it's never too late.

Every match you're learning something new, and that was just confirmation that you never, ever give up.

Q. How aware were you of the sort of scenario that one set would have been enough for you to seal the qualification?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Zero. I had no idea. I found out after when she retired that that was enough. Yeah, I think that was good that I didn't know.

But I knew that today every point counted, like, we had to, you know, every game was important. Yeah, there was not

a moment in that match where I thought about, oh, what it's going to be, how many games isn't enough. It was just about winning the whole match.

Q. Through to the semifinals, same position Australia were in last year. Do you sense that there is even more belief in the team this time around?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Definitely. I feel like we are in a better position coming into the semis. I feel like we are confident where we believe like we can actually win, whereas last year we were, like, Wow, we made the semis, what a great achievement.

This year it feels a little bit different, as it should. We have showed really great tennis to get ourselves there. Yeah, feels good to be in that position.

Q. Just a word from you on what Storm is doing. She's become such a reliable singles option for you. Did you sort of really expect that from her, or is it kind of a surprise?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: I'm not surprised, because I have seen Storm over the years, you know, really step up in these weeks. Overall her tennis, you know, I think that she's in a pickle with her singles just because she's such a good doubles player, and it's really not easy to pursue your singles career when there are so many weeks you're missing out on.

I truly hope that she gives it more of a go and sacrifices maybe a little bit of that doubles, because she really can be great. She shows it every time here under pressure, which is even more impressive. So for me, it's not surprising at all.

Q. Is it nice coming in as the second player having Storm already won, seems to be a position you're in quite regularly?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Oh, it's the best (smiling). I mean, it's definitely so nice to come in and you already are up 1-0. It gives you a boost of confidence. And even if you're down, you know, you're like, I'm going to fight through, but



... when all is said, we're done.®

you know that you have that cushion.

Yeah, she can keep doing that. I don't mind it (smiling).

Q. You were just saying that you felt a little bit unbalanced during the match. Why was that? Any reasons?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Yeah, I think it was credit to her. She made me feel like my game wasn't working. She made me question when should I be aggressive, when do I pull the trigger, when do I sit back and rally. You know, that's her power. But my power is to keep figuring out what to do out there to win points.

Yeah, I'm very proud of that today.

Q. The point about mentality during a match and never give up, et cetera, it's obviously been a big change in the last year for you with that aspect. Do you feel that there was a point this year where that sort of an attitude was really magnified, where you really felt very positive about those sort of feelings?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: I don't think there was an exact moment where I felt it. I think overall I have always been a fighter inside. But it's just that sometimes I would give in too much to the emotions of being too down on myself, and it would look like I kind of gave it up too easy, but it's just because I go away from what I'm supposed to do out there to just feeling sorry for myself.

That has improved a lot, because I'm just kind of all about the business but I always show that heart now. Yeah, it's just about, you know, figuring it out in a better way.

Q. It's more than likely, not definite, but more than likely that Australians will come up against Spain in the semifinals. What are your thoughts on going up against Spain?

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Why is that? Isn't there like a draw?

THE MODERATOR: No, it's done.

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC: Oh, it's done. Okay, got it.

Yeah, I mean, look, once you're in the semis, there is no easy matches. I'm excited to play Paula again if I'm going to play. I mean (smiling)...

But, yeah, it's going to be interesting, because like, you know, we showed that Storm has been incredible. I feel like I'm feeling good here, I'm playing well. Anything can

happen, and that's what you love about Billie Jean King Cup.

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