

# Billie Jean King Cup

Saturday, 12 November 2022

Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Emirates Arena

Team Great Britain

Captain Anne Keothavong

Alicia Barnett

Olivia Nicholls

Press Conference

SANDERS-STOSUR/Barnett-Nicholls

7-6, 6-7, 10-6

Team Australia - 2

Team Great Britain - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Anne, you have only walked off court so it's difficult to put your thoughts into words, but can you sort of try and sum up the day?**

CAPTAIN KEOTHAVONG: Well, wow, what a day. I don't know where to start. Gosh, coming so close. God, we were close.

Yeah, I'm just gutted for everyone right now, but also I think we have to try and keep things in perspective. You know, what a fantastic week it really has been for the team. I don't know how many people gave us much of a chance really to even come through the group stages.

You know, it really is a fantastic achievement to reach the semifinals, but we felt we could have gone further. That's why it hurts so much. You saw how the players all left it out there. To come that close, it hurts. It's as simple as that.

It's going to hurt the players for a while, but they'll get over it. You know, they can still hold their heads high, because they really have shown what they are capable of under a huge amount of pressure to deliver, and in the end it came down to a few points.

**Q. Is it tougher to take because you were four points**



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away?

ALICIA BARNETT: Thanks for reminding us (smiling).

Look, at the end of the day, I think we'd all rather have a really competitive match than be completely whitewashed. We put it all out there, and we did our best.

Yeah, it's really tough, but at the same time, like, we win as a team, we lose as a team. We have had a fantastic week, and it's been an absolute pleasure to be playing in front of our home crowds with such amazing girls and such an amazing team.

Yeah, it's going to hurt, but at the same time, like, that's tennis.

**Q. How often do you get called for foot faults, Olivia?**

OLIVIA NICHOLLS: Actually probably too much, but you'd think the British linesman might have given me that one at 6-all in the breaker.

CAPTAIN KEOTHAVONG: You haven't foot-faulted the entire match. Seriously, 6-All in the...

OLIVIA NICHOLLS: I mean, I'd like to see the replay. Haven't hit a foot fault all week.

Look, it's one of those. I mean, we're up against two Grand Slam champions. Storm's top 10. I think like we literally couldn't have come any closer in this match. We, as Lissy said, handled the occasion so well. If we would have been walked over, then it wouldn't have been, you know, it would have hurt more to do that than it does to lose in the fashion that we just lost. Like I'd rather lose literally leaving every last ounce of energy out there than to just get rolled over.

So as much as it hurts, I couldn't and we couldn't have given any more.

**Q. Anne, as you say, not many people would have given you a chance of getting this close coming into the week, so what does this tell you about what you**



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**can achieve in the competition, particularly with other players at your disposal as well?**

CAPTAIN KEOTHAVONG: Yeah, I think this week has shown you in a team environment anything is possible. You look at the caliber of some of the players we've had this week in Rybakina, Wimbledon champion, obviously Badosa, both those players in a group that we were in, Coco Gauff here, Pliskova.

There's some, yeah, really classy tennis players. But anything is possible, and I mean, the match Harriet played today was outstanding. She really was on fire.

Yeah, Tomljanovic could barely find anything to get past her, but not just today, against Spain, against Badosa, I think it proves to her and the rest of us what you're all about here if you apply yourself in a correct way. With the support, you know, she's capable of playing some fantastic tennis.

Heather, in her singles, as well, came really close. I mean, you know, she didn't serve as well as she did the other day, and her hits -- it's just a difficult one to call. Again, you know, we came so close, and, you know, overall when we do have a moment to just sit back and reflect, yeah, it's been a ride.

**Q. You sort of answered my question. Harriet is ranked I think 98. I mean, do you think she should be aiming, on the evidence of today, considerably higher than that?**

CAPTAIN KEOTHAVONG: Yeah. She's capable of producing some fantastic tennis. You know, she's had her fair share of big wins.

But I guess for her it's about producing it on a week in, week out basis. But I know how much she loves representing Great Britain. Sometimes in these events it brings out the very best in a player. You know, you can thrive in this kind of environment. And I think Storm Sanders on the Australian team is another example of someone who rises to the occasion and loves it.

Harriet has been, yeah, a great example to everyone this week. You know, I do think sometimes she doesn't get the credit she deserves, but gosh, she is such a tough competitor. This week she showed us exactly why.

**Q. It's appeared this week you really relish this occasion, this stage in front of good crowds, on the BBC, and stuff. Does this give you the drive to do greater things on the tour?**

OLIVIA NICHOLLS: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, we've got some big goals for next year. Like we finished I think 25 in the race this year, only off counting one Grand Slam. Yeah, we want to finish, want to be in the top 8 next year. We want to make end-of-year finals. I don't think that's an unrealistic target when we're playing all of the slams.

If we can get up to about 45, we can play all the Masters 1000s, and then we have the opportunity to do that. We were playing Storm who is top 10 today. We have literally just lost our match tiebreak, couldn't have been any closer.

I think we have proven that our level is there, and once we have the opportunity to play those high level tournaments week in and week out, I don't see why we can't have an excellent year next year.

**Q. Would you like Britain to try and host this event again potentially?**

CAPTAIN KEOTHAVONG: That's a no-brainer. Look, we are very grateful to the LTA for investing in this competition. Without that, we wouldn't have had the opportunity here this week.

I think, you know, the way the players have conducted themselves and gone about it and approached each match I think shows how much they want it and how much they are ready to perform.

Yeah, they absolutely deserve it. Yes is the answer.

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