

Billie Jean King Cup

Saturday, 11 November 2023

Team Canada

Captain Heidi El Tabakh

Gabriela Dabrowski

Leylah Fernandez

Flash Quotes

DABROWSKI-FERNANDEZ/Krejciikova-Siniakova

7-5, 7-6

Team Canada - 2

Team Czechia - 1

Q. Gaby, can you sum up your emotions of what's been such an amazing, magical evening for Canada?

GABRIELA DABROWSKI: Yeah, really special. Well, I knew that Canada had made the semis many years ago, but obviously, as of late, this was our best result. So to be able to do one better and also get closer to what our Davis Cup team has achieved, it's really, really cool.

It's an honor to be on this team and to have witnessed the level of competitiveness and poise, you know, from our girls having played singles.

I know me and our Genie, in our matches that we played, I know they didn't count towards the -- well, actually, the first one may have, to win 3-0, because we didn't know the result of the next day yet. I'm really proud of how we have risen to the challenge. I'm really excited for tomorrow. Should be a really great day.

Q. What did it take for you and Leylah? You haven't played that many doubles matches together recently to beat a very established team, won seven Grand Slams. What did it take to beat them?

GABRIELA DABROWSKI: Well, I'd say, I mean, I played Barbora and Kat twice, I think, this year, and within obviously, like, a week and a half, because I played them at the Finals with my consistent partner. So I felt like I was really familiar with their games.

I tried to do things that would make them uncomfortable



and have to come up with shots that maybe they didn't want to have to come up with. But I thought they played probably some of the best tennis that they have played lately, and so I'm really grateful that Leylah was so present, even after, like, a really tough singles match. That's a lot to ask of someone, to come back within 30 minutes and play again.

So, yeah, I think our games matched up quite well. I felt like where I'm weaker, Leylah is stronger, and vice versa. Honestly, it was a lot of fun to just fight point by point together.

Q. It's going to be a great day tomorrow, isn't it?

GABRIELA DABROWSKI: Yeah.

Q. You alluded to maybe following in the footsteps of the Davis Cup team. First Billie Jean King Cup final, Fed Cup final, whatever you want to call it. Your names, the five of you, will go down in history forever. Must be amazing for you.

GABRIELA DABROWSKI: Yeah, to have a chance to do that is pretty incredible. I think over the last, probably last decade, the level of tennis in Canada has gone up tenfold. You even see the growth of the sport in our country increasing so much, so I think to be a part of the team that could actually win what is considered the World Cup of Tennis would just be absolutely phenomenal and hopefully inspire generations to come to follow their dreams.

You know, I'm not going to play forever, but hopefully someone like Marina is going to be on the team for a really long time and have even more success. Yeah, I think it's just a wonderful opportunity to have a crack at a title here.

Q. Leylah, a phenomenal evening for Canada, phenomenal evening for you. Can you sum up your emotions, the match-winning point? That was some victory tonight.

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I'm just ecstatic. Extremely proud of our team spirit, team effort. I think today was one of our toughest ties, because we are playing against one of the



best players in the world individually and the best team in the world, let's say, of Billie Jean King Cup. They have won it a couple of times.

We definitely had a tough test for us, but we were just super excited, motivated, and we wanted to put on a show. Like I said, I'm extremely proud of our team, of our team spirit, and I can't wait for tomorrow's final.

Q. Seemed like you had a mission. Can you express what this means for Canadian tennis? Just a phenomenal thing, isn't it?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: Yeah, it's an amazing thing for Canadian tennis. I think for us as a country we have always been kind of labeled as a hockey nation, which is true, but we are also a tennis nation. There are a lot of tennis girls, boys that are playing, that are picking up a racquet and that are competing. I do know that they have big dreams, like all of us.

I think for us to be doing this, to be able to showcase that Canada is also one of the best countries in the world is an honor, a privilege, and hopefully young girls, boys for Canada, can continue in their dream.

Q. How much are you looking forward to tomorrow, showcasing your talent and the talent of Canadian tennis on the biggest stage, getting over that final hurdle tomorrow?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I don't really want to think about the result or anything. I just want to enjoy the victory tonight.

I think tomorrow is just going to be an exciting matchup for us Canadians. We're playing against Italy, tough players. They bring a lot of heart, a lot of grit on the court. I just know that it's going to be a tough tie for us.

It's a final, so we are going to leave it all out there. So hopefully with fingers crossed and stars aligned, we can lift the trophy up. Like I said, we are just going to bring the same team spirit, same work ethic, and same fight as today and the other ties.

Q. How proud are you of the girls tonight? Can you sum up how proud you are?

CAPTAIN HEIDI EL TABAKH: Yeah, today was an incredible day, really. After Marina's match, Leylah, Leylah is just incredible. Marina went out and tried her best. Barbora came out and played incredible, played like a Grand Slam champion. She earned every point.

You know, after that, of course, you know, I have all the confidence in Leylah, but she's up against Vondrousova who is playing incredible tennis and is, again, just top-10 player, super tough. Czech Republic has won this multiple times. They've got great experience.

You know, I had a lot of confidence in Leylah, but for her to pull it off in three sets, playing incredible, putting everything out on the court, leaving her heart out really was so special.

Then the dubs just playing against the team who has literally won every slam, everything. That was extremely, extremely, extremely tough. I'm so proud of my girls, man. Really, really proud.

But we're not done. We've got to come out here tomorrow and do it all over again. The focus now is obviously on recovery and getting the girls ready for tomorrow. But I am so proud of them.

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