

Billie Jean King Cup

Friday, 15 November 2024

Team USA

Captain Lindsay Davenport

Press Conference



HRUNCAKOVA-MIHALIKOVA/Krueger-Townsend

6-3, 3-6, 10-8

Team Slovakia - 2

Team USA - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Commiserations. Can you sum up the evening.

CAPTAIN LINDSAY DAVENPORT: Yeah, gosh, super, you know, up and down kind of emotionally for really everybody. I thought Taylor did a great job playing in the first match, really did what we wanted her to do, be able to win that one.

Danielle just wasn't feeling great out there, really struggling kind of right now with her confidence and hasn't played tons. She almost, like, was able to flip it in the second. She got a couple of points away from winning that second set. Maybe that would have helped.

We were dealing with some injuries with the other two, so a little bit limited on my options for doubles, hoping that, you know, the momentum of the second set would really help, but, you know, it was a slow start to the tiebreaker.

It was playing so fast, very fast for kind of Ashlyn out there. She started settling down but just not quite enough in that breaker.

Q. Danielle, the emotions seemed to get to her at certain points in that second set. Can you talk a little bit about what you were trying to tell her, what you were trying to get through to her to try and turn it around?

CAPTAIN LINDSAY DAVENPORT: Yeah, I mean, the biggest thing is these are wonderful, wonderful ladies, and just trying to get them overall to, you know, be good and be okay. Sometimes players are going through a lot off the court. A lot of times people don't really realize that we see

athletes out there kind of competing, but, you know, real life is pretty heavy sometimes.

Danielle was doing her absolute best to compete. Sometimes, like, it just gets the best of you in certain situations, and that happened. I thought she did a really, really great job of kind of getting it back together, and like I said, almost kind of flipping that second set.

She's a warrior. Always wanted her on this team. I wish we could have given her, like, another chance on Sunday to get back out there, because her tennis is so great, and she's a wonderful, wonderful person. Sometimes you just kind of struggle, you know, in your arena of sport, and that's just kind of what she's going through right now.

Q. A word on your opponents. They are obviously quite a small nation. They came here just really to score an upset and they did, and there were some really good performances from their team.

CAPTAIN LINDSAY DAVENPORT: Amazing. Sramkova was absolutely awesome. She was very impressive, handled the moment well. Especially when things were maybe just getting a little close, she really stepped up and played great.

I know Renata. My son plays on the juniors, so I have seen her play many times. We kind of thought that she would be the one playing No. 2, so she has a wonderful future, as well. She's the same age as my son, so I have just been following her, watched her play at some of the ITF juniors that I go to with him.

We weren't caught off-guard with her. Know they have got really good depth. Also really good indoor players. I think when you grow up in a country where, for a handful of months every year you're playing indoor tennis, you get quite good at it. All of them play very fast. They are very good at picking up hard balls, I think because they spend time indoors from October to March or whatever it is. So they really handled everything very, very well tonight.

Q. There is always a lot of expectation on the U.S. team to do so well. Do you think they almost felt like



they had a free hit because they were coming up against, with not a lot of pressure on their shoulders, the Slovakian team?

CAPTAIN LINDSAY DAVENPORT: It could be. We didn't feel tons of pressure. We obviously have high expectations, but I think we knew our top five players weren't here.

I think that this team was excited to see what they could do. I thought if we could just kind of hang around -- I knew this one was going to be tough. They are big hitters. Was hopeful then to give ourselves a chance against Australia, but sometimes it doesn't work out like that.

Like I said, two of the five players dealing with injuries, all of a sudden we're down to three. They competed so hard. They did their absolute best. Gosh, they saved so many match points, almost were able to get it back, but just dug themselves into too deep a hole.

Super proud of how they kind of handled the week. A tough night, no doubt. But, you know, hopefully we'll be back next year and ready to kind of go to work again.

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