

Billie Jean King Cup

Friday, 15 November 2024

Team Great Britain

Emma Raducanu

Press Conference



E. RADUCANU/J. Niemeier

6-4, 6-4

Team Germany - 0

Team Great Britain - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Emma.

Q. Congratulations. Obviously your first match in a while. How are you feeling emotionally and physically after that?

EMMA RADUCANU: Yeah, I'm very pleased to come out with that performance after a long layoff. I think it's been around two months since my last match, and it's never easy coming back from injury and the difference between practice and a match.

So I think I got into the match pretty well. Held serve, which was important in the start, because Jule is a very tough opponent, especially on these courts, big ball strike, big serve. And I think I did a good job of getting a lot of first serves back and then earning some double faults I think in the first and second set.

Yeah, I'm very pleased with that. Feel pretty good physically. Emotionally I felt pretty calm out there. Yeah, I'm very pleased to have scored that point. Yeah, it's a nice win (smiling).

Q. Congrats. I want to talk to you about your serve. Obviously you lost a bit of rhythm at the end, but throughout the match, your first-serve and second-serve speeds were up a lot than previously this year. How much of a priority has that been? What have you changed?

EMMA RADUCANU: Yeah, I have been working on it. I had a little bit of time off after Seoul. So training for next year, I do want to work on my serve and make that a bit more of a weapon.

Today I got a lot of free points, got a lot of aces, but it does come with a bit of a tradeoff, I think especially in the early stages when I'm figuring it out still. I have to take the double faults with the aces, I guess, and the free points.

At this point in my development on it, I would say I'm very pleased with how I served. Some big points, I hit some aces, which it's important. Yeah, I'm pleased that some of the practice has been paying off.

Q. How much of a change was that, and what was that process like?

EMMA RADUCANU: Yeah, I think naturally my serve has gone through a few different variations. I think if you look at myself on the grass, it was even shorter, and then I wasn't really loving that, so I changed it back to a little bit longer.

But I think one thing with me is it just naturally kind of takes its own shape, and I need, like, constant top-up and constant reminders. Otherwise my technique just turns into a complete different serve and I lose my rhythm on it.

That's something I have been trying to get back, and yeah, I'm pretty happy with the one that I'm on now and just want to try and make that sit in a bit more.

Q. You're still fairly sort of inexperienced in this competition. I think, what is it, it's your third time playing. What do you find the difference is playing in a team competition compared to playing individual? And coming back from injury, I guess, is it sort of a nice way to come back when you're straight into this team?

EMMA RADUCANU: Big time. I think it's a great way to come back, even though there is some pressure, you know, to score a point for your team. You know, you're not just playing for yourself; you're playing for everyone.

I think as an individual athlete, it's not like a tour event. So I think having your team members on the side cheering you on when you might be a little bit nervous, and having the ability to use on-court coaching and getting feedback is



very helpful when you haven't played for a long time.

But today I think I wasn't very reliant on any information. I think I played pretty well and had things under control, just the right information at the right time.

Q. You seem to thrive in team competitions. What is it about them that you think, like, highlights your game so much?

EMMA RADUCANU: I think, to be honest, I love the environment. I think the support was great. You know, the instruments and the crowd, I mean, it felt like we were playing at home, which is really nice.

I do thrive on a good crowd. But also, I think it's just a result of good training weeks. I mean, before the tie in April I had a very good training block. Before this, I had, you know, three good weeks of practice, too. I think it's also just a result of that good work.

Q. Congrats on the win. At the end there you were kind of cruising, and then suddenly things picked up. You seemed to cope pretty well with not winning on the first, second, third match points. What was it like in those moments, and how did you keep your cool?

EMMA RADUCANU: Yeah, I mean, I think I have been in that situation before. It's not the first time I have been serving for it, had match points, and then got broken and had to kind of fight my way back into the match, and it's not going to be the last time that happens, either.

I think I'm pretty good at regrouping, and in those clutch points, clutch moments, I think I do most of the time rise to the challenge. I actually enjoy those moments as much as it's possible to.

Yeah, I mean, I'm proud with how I regrouped, because it's not easy. I could have easily got broken there and just go again from 5-All. I did a really good job to give myself that cushion and that lead, so any first-match-back nerves, I had a bit of, like, room to maybe, you know, lose my focus a little bit, although it's not ideal.

Q. You mentioned the crowd, and we actually spoke with Jule a little while ago, and she said she loved the atmosphere, even though it was mainly against her, because she really enjoyed the amount of noise and excitement there was. Would you have a message for all the fans that have turned out so far and are rooting for Great Britain the way they have been?

EMMA RADUCANU: Yeah, of course. I want to say thank you so much to everyone for coming out here, traveling

out, and especially given the conditions and the circumstances with the weather. We really appreciate it, and it honestly makes such a big difference, because, yeah, we get fired up.

We don't want to let the crowd down. We don't want to let everyone who came out down.

Yeah, it's an amazing experience to be a part of. We are very lucky the crowd is with us, but even so, I think that's what sport is about, playing in front of an amazing atmosphere. And it's not often you get opportunities like this where it's for your country; it's not just for yourself.

Q. How is it having Anne on the bench? What's her kind of dynamic in that role and what do you like as a player? What do you like to get from a coach in that situation?

EMMA RADUCANU: Yeah, I think Anne is good at saying the right things at the right time, not necessarily overloading with too much information on the bench.

I think, I mean, today I felt pretty in control of the situation, so I didn't feel like I needed too much info. I think it's important, you know, it's not just her, it's the team behind the court on the bench, looking at the stats, getting their input, getting their feedback, and they are always feeding back to Anne, as well.

I think it's not just me and Anne on the court. It's a team effort. I think today, especially with Jule, she has a big first serve, so anything I could get on her serve, directions, anything to cover, but at the end of the day, I like to take responsibility for those decisions, too, rather than being told something and then the other direction comes and you're looking a bit like frustrated maybe.

So today I didn't think I relied too much on anything.

Q. (Question off microphone.)

EMMA RADUCANU: I think if I ask for it, then they'll look at something specifically, but, you know, I honestly felt pretty good, so I wasn't really asking.

Q. I just wanted to bust a myth. I read this interview you did where it named your idols as Murray, Robson, and Jule Niemeier. I just wanted to know if that's a thing, if that's true?

EMMA RADUCANU: Who?

Q. Niemeier, your opponent today. They said that you called her an idol or something. I guess that's not a

thing then?

EMMA RADUCANU: I'm not sure if I said that (smiling).
But she's a great opponent, great girl. I'm a big fan of her,
but "idol" I think is a strong word maybe.

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