

Billie Jean King Cup

Tuesday, 19 November 2024

Team Great Britain

Captain Anne Keothavong

Katie Boulter

Emma Raducanu

Heather Watson

Olivia Nicholls

Press Conference



HRUNCAKOVA-MIHALIKOVA/Nicholls-Watson

6-2, 6-2

Team Great Britain - 1

Team Slovakia - 2

THE MODERATOR: We will start the press conference with Team Great Britain. Questions, please.

Q. Anne, could you just sum up how you and the whole team are feeling after that?

CAPTAIN ANNE KEOTHAVONG: Gutted. You know, I think we're all absolutely gutted. We came into this event really believing that we had a good shot at it, and, you know, unfortunately we fell short.

We came up against a better team. But, you know, it's still pretty raw right now. It's quite difficult to find the right words.

But I think it's important, I guess, as captain, just to -- you know, it's been a long journey to get to this stage in the competition. It's not often that we have had opportunities to play for the final. Okay, two years ago it was different circumstances. But overall, you know, I've got to feel really proud of this team and all the efforts, not just here in Malaga, but in previous ties to get us to this stage.

You know, I've got to be thankful and grateful that these players put themselves out there. You know, it's not an easy time of year, end of season for most. But they're here representing their nation, doing so with a huge amount of pride. But right now it's just, yeah, it's still quite raw.

Q. Katie, obviously a really tough match out there today. What do you think maybe changed the momentum at the start of that second set?

KATIE BOULTER: Yeah, I mean, obviously a world-class player, someone who plays above their ranking. I knew that going in I knew how tough today was going to be.

I couldn't let it slip at any point, and, you know, I felt like I started to struggle a little bit on serve. That basically was the match for me.

I was still there fighting, giving everything I possibly could, but ultimately I didn't serve well enough, which kind of cost me the match. But, I mean, credit to her. She played some very good tennis and started to adapt from the way I was playing in the first set, and, I mean, it's natural for players to do that. But, yeah, I couldn't dig it out in the end, but I gave it everything I got.

Q. Heather and Olivia, how difficult was it to go out there today having not had the opportunity to get on court earlier in the competition?

OLIVIA NICHOLLS: I mean, it was, yeah, it was a challenge, for sure, but I think on the day, we came up against two very hot players who served incredibly and made it very difficult for us to get any kind of momentum out there.

I felt like at times we were, you know, very close to turning things, but yeah, they just played an unbelievable match today, so credit to them.

Q. Emma, is there any positives to be taken from the last week? Could you sum up how this experience has maybe helped you moving forward and what you can take into your own individual goals?

EMMA RADUCANU: Yeah, I think I had some good performances on the court this week. I played three matches, which is great for me. I haven't played in a while, so I think being able to score a point and get on the board was helpful.



I think the positives to take are physically I held up pretty well. It didn't take me too long to kind of step back into that match sharpness. I think I was pretty sharp out there.

Yeah, there is a lot of positives for me to take individually. I think I did pretty well, and it was obviously made a lot easier by having a great team behind me. Everyone was really kind of working to help each other and push each other to do better.

Q. Emma, obviously you were so close to getting to the final. Does it feel like this team can keep pushing to be there or thereabouts in the years to come?

EMMA RADUCANU: Yeah, I think we were right there. I think, you know, a few points kind of swung it in the second singles, but, you know, Boults has been playing great singles matches. We have been winning on singles, you know, the last two ties and didn't even need a doubles.

I think we definitely have a winning team. I think we can improve certain things, but overall, I think we did a really good job and there is a lot of positives to take.

Q. There is positives to take, and it must give you confidence for the future. Just talk about that. How will you pick up the team maybe later tonight? What things will you say?

CAPTAIN ANNE KEOTHAVONG: I haven't really thought about it yet, but I'm open to suggestions, girls (smiling).

Honestly, right now I am just, yeah, you know, it's just a tough one to take right now. But, yeah, like I said, we've got a fantastic team, and we do need to find a way to pick ourselves up, maintain perspective, most of all.

You know, it's just obviously quite a bit, well, it just hurts right now, because yeah, I don't know how long it was when we walked off the court, but not that long.

Yes, I think I can take confidence from the fact that we've got incredible players in the UK. You know, we've shown with our best players what's possible. We came close.

It wasn't to be on this occasion, but that's not to say, you know, next year, whether it's next year or the year after, we're going to have chances in this competition. I do really believe that.

Q. Katie, you have had a long sort of couple of months now, a really long swing in Asia and now here. Do you feel kind of emotionally drained at the end of that, and how much are you looking forward to now just having

a break?

KATIE BOULTER: Yeah, I mean, obviously it's going to be really important for me to take a moment for myself, remember what I've actually done this year. I've got two titles behind me. I'm at a career-high ranking.

You know, this week has also been great for me. I have had some really good wins. I really want to use that next year, and I really feel like I can push on. But it's going to be extremely important for me to take a moment right now and have a few days to myself and pick myself back up.

Yeah, it's a long season. I'm a little emotionally tired, but I have given everything I possibly could for this country, and I'm proud of that. That's all I can ask of myself.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports