

# Guadalajara Open

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Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico

## Jessica Pegula

Press Conference



J. PEGULA/V. Azarenka

7-6, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: You're into your second WTA 1000 final of the year. How do you assess your performance?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I feel really excited, really happy about my performance today. Happy the way I hung in that first set and was still able to win it.

Again, my second final this year means a lot, especially kind of the last tournament of the year to finish really strong, win or lose tomorrow, is just kind of the icing on the cake of two really good years. I'm really proud of myself.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. 40 victories this season. Your first final here in Mexico. You can be the first champion of this tournament. How do you feel?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, very happy. That would be really cool, to be the first tournament winner here. It would be extra especially, especially here in Mexico. I've really enjoyed my time. The fans have been really great, very excitable. I think they're really happy to see some top-level tennis.

It would be an honor if I was able to win the title tomorrow.

**Q. A while back people said Jessica Pegula, the owner of the Buffalo Bills. Now people say, Jessica Pegula, one of the best tennis players in the world. If it was difficult for you in any time, and how do you feel now the people knows you for your performance in the court?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, it's definitely something I've always had to deal with I guess. Especially as I was coming up, I was doing better, people more kind of knew my name.

Always I think important that it's nice that I was able to

make a name for myself in this sport. I think I did that already. But I think just solidifying it by how well I've been doing the last year definitely gives me a lot of confidence.

It's nice to see people noticing for what I'm good at and not other things. It's special. I'm glad that people are starting to say that.

**Q. Tomorrow you are going to play for your first title since 2019. How do you handle the pressure and the nervousness before the match?**

JESSICA PEGULA: I was in the final of Madrid, so second final this year.

Yeah, of course, there's always I guess nerves going into a final. At the same time you're happy to be there. In a way I feel like you have pressure and you also don't have pressure because when you start a tournament, your goal is to get to the end and to give yourself a chance to win a title.

When you finally make it to kind of the last stage, I think you get more excited nervous. But it depends on the day. I'm sure I'll see how I feel walking on court tomorrow, how my warmup feels.

I think in the end it's always good nerves. It's something that it's okay happening because I'm in a final and I'm in a good position to win. Definitely try to look at it more as a positive pressure than anything negative.

**Q. How do you feel of this match because Victoria was the favorite of the people?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Sorry, what was that?

**Q. How do you feel after this match?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, no, I feel good. Again, I thought I played a really good first set. Second set, you could tell she was not feeling 100%.

I think, again, coming back from being down in the first set, I really wanted to get that first set and to push her a little bit



to see what would happen. If I didn't turn around that first set, I'm not sure, maybe she would have been feeling fine and I would have lost.

I think it's just important that no matter what the score is, every game, every single point matters, even if it seems like it's not going your way. I am proud I was just able to change the momentum.

**Q. After the big win of tonight that is leading you to the final, how does it feel to be received by all these kids?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, it's been super cool to see. It's definitely probably one of the places where you see the most I think kids screaming for your name and your autograph and your picture. That's been really sweet.

It's always fun for me as a player to sign autographs and take pictures. I was always the same kid that wanted autographs and pictures when I was younger. You never know who those people may be. They may become a really good tennis player someday. It is a really fun story they get to have.

Definitely very rewarding to see all the kids wanting your picture. They're really cute, too, so it's hard to say no.

**Q. Your rival is right next to us at the stadium. We don't know who it will be. Whoever wins tonight, what would you say to your rival?**

JESSICA PEGULA: What would I say?

**Q. Yes.**

JESSICA PEGULA: I would say, I don't know, good luck, let's have fun I guess. I guess it would be something like that.

Again, whoever, it would be the person's first 1000 title. I always think that's a special moment. I would just say, good luck, let's have fun.

**Q. Obviously your season is not even close to being over. You can accomplish something quite significant tomorrow. Of all of the accomplishments that you've already had under your belt this year, statistically, milestones, what stands out to you? What are you the most proud of so far?**

JESSICA PEGULA: I think you already asked me this. I think this is a loaded question (smiling).

There are so many moments. I think I'm just so proud of

how I dealt with the year. There are so many ups and downs. I think I even had pressure because I did so well the year before to even back up that year.

To be able to build off of that I think is something really special that I'll always be very proud of, is how I handled kind of the pressure of coming into this year, being able to build off of it. I'm not sure if a lot of people thought I would be at my ranking now or have as many chances as I've had.

I think just being able to kind of prove people wrong, prove myself wrong a little bit, just to keep building is probably what I'm most proud of.

It's a long year. There's a lot of ups and downs. The good thing is there's always another week and you can always turn it around the next week. I think that's something I've done very well this year especially.

**Q. You came from San Diego, change of conditions. It doesn't sound like you were feeling it right off the bat here in Guadalajara. Obviously the match points that you saved in the opening round. Now you're one match away from the title. Can you talk about your journey of managing all the adaptation that you maybe had to take on?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I mean, obviously getting racquets strung, kind of figuring it out, but also having an open mind, not getting too frustrated or upset when something doesn't feel right, racquet tension doesn't feel right.

The conditions change from day to night. It was totally different playing tonight than it was a couple days ago. I think you have to have an open mind and realize you're not always going to feel great.

That's something I've definitely needed to learn over the last couple years: even when you don't feel 100%, you still have to figure it out.

I think I've realized that I'm good enough that I don't need to feel 100% to win these matches. That gives you a lot of confidence especially on the days that don't feel well.

I think it's just really mental mindset dealing with all the different changes and learning how to adapt.

**Q. Looking ahead to either Maria or Marie. Obviously Sak having an emotional week. A good opportunity for both of you. And if you could talk about Marie as well.**

JESSICA PEGULA: They're both going to be tough. I

have played both of them several times. Always seem to have pretty tough matches whenever I play them.

Obviously Maria I think has gained a lot of confidence this week. I know she's had an up-and-down year. But like she said herself, she still considers herself a top-10 player. I think that's true, especially when she's playing well. It just goes to show you she still obviously is at that level. Kudos to her for, yeah, stepping up this week when she had to. That's going to give her a lot of confidence. If I play her, that's going to be a tough match knowing she has that confidence coming in here.

With Marie, she's always just tough. There's no other way to put it. She's going to make you win the match no matter what. I've had some really tough matches with her, really long matches with her. I'm definitely going to be prepared for that.

I know she's just a really happy-go-lucky person, has such a great attitude all the time. I think, yeah, she's going to be happy no matter what, which makes it tough to play because she's always so positive. On that side of things, she's just going to make you earn it for sure.

Either way, I'll look for a tough match. Hopefully I can take the title.

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