

# Guadalajara Open

Sunday, 23 October 2022

Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico

## Jessica Pegula

Press Conference



J. PEGULA/M. Sakkari

6-2, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Jess, your first 1000 title. Give us your thoughts about your performance.

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I thought I played probably my cleanest match yet in the final today. I could feel in warmup I felt the best I felt all week.

I'm glad I was able to work through all the tough conditions earlier in the week and to actually feel great today. It was just a bonus.

Very emotional week I guess, finally, finally getting a big title to my name.

So very, very happy.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. How do you feel? Did you expect this result in this tournament?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Again, I feel amazing. I mean, there's not really much else to say. I won the tournament. I'm so happy it was at a 1000 event. All the people I beat, my draw to get here in my opinion was honestly the toughest out of everybody. So I was a little annoyed when I saw the draw come out.

But the way I've been able to manage it throughout the whole week, today handle my nerves and emotions, just super proud of myself.

**Q. What will your goals for the next season be?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Well, I still have WTA Finals and I have Billie Jean King Cup coming up the next couple weeks, for the rest of the month basically. So I'm just really going to focus on that.

Obviously I'll take a little vacation, a little rest, enjoy the

holidays back in America, spend some time with my family.

Yeah, off-season is right around the corner. I'll definitely go back to training by December, yeah, look forward to starting the year right back up again in Australia.

**Q. 41 victories this season, the first title in this first Guadalajara Open 1000. What is the goal for the end of the year, for the end of the season?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Well, I think coming into the end of the year, I really kept saying it throughout the year, I really wanted to win a tournament this year. The only title I won kind of before the COVID era was when I won D.C., which is a smaller tournament. That was really a big relief for me.

I've had some tough matches. I've lost to a lot of people who ended up winning the tournament. That was kind of annoying.

In San Diego, I lost to Iga again in the semifinals. She won the tournament. I was, again, kind of like, Okay, finally when am I going to get my chance? Again, I saw the draw. I was like, Ugh, this is going to be tough.

I'm just super happy to end my year with a title, with a goal I had this whole year: to win a tournament. To be able to do that in the last event of the year, just the reward of going to play the Finals and Billie Jean King Cup is just going to be really fun for me.

I'm just excited to end my year on a good note.

**Q. Something to say to the Mexican fans?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Thank you for supporting me. I mean, I felt so much support all week. Everyone screaming my name. It's been amazing. All the bracelets you keep giving me. I have a lot right now (smiling).

Just appreciate my first time being in Mexico. It's been super special, so thank you.

**Q. You said after the trophy ceremony that you were this close of not coming to Mexico because you don't**



**like altitude. I can guess we're expecting you again here in Guadalajara and in altitude-type of tournaments?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I don't think I can use that excuse any more. I've proved a lot to myself. I've proved that. I've played in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Denver, Colorado in the U.S. It ended in disaster. I was horrible, horrible. I swore off altitude the last couple years.

Yeah, it's just kind of funny. My coach kept telling me, You love altitude, you love altitude, you love altitude.

I was like, Okay, we'll see.

Yeah, I think we're going to have to come back.

**Q. In the crowd I heard a little kid say, Jessica is the best player in the world.**

JESSICA PEGULA: It's so cute. The kids are so cute. I think it's so nice to see, especially when kids are screaming your name or yelling for you.

Super special seeing kids because when you remember when you were a kid, when you were younger, screaming their name and wanting autographs. I means a lot to them.

I know how it felt when I was younger and I got to see a player, especially someone I really liked and enjoyed watching, that it was really special that you could get an autograph and a picture.

I've tried to sign a lot of autographs and take a lot of pictures this week. It's hard to say no when they're chanting your name.

**Q. You'll go down in history as the first Guadalajara Open winner. What are your thoughts on that?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Again, something special that I'll always get to have. First winner in Guadalajara is pretty cool.

Again, first time playing here, first time being in Mexico. I think it's just really special. I think it's special for the fans and for everyone that's running the tournament. They put on such a great event. I really did enjoy myself.

Yeah, it's just exciting to be the first. Hopefully I can be the next. I guess there's only one person that can be the first champion, so I'm glad I get to do that.

**Q. Are you an ambitious person and if this win is going to help you grow that ambition? What do you**

**expect from yourself in the next years, months?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Did you say 'ambitious'?

**Q. Yes.**

JESSICA PEGULA: I'm definitely a very ambitious person. A little bit of a perfectionist, as well. Yeah, I don't think you could win if you weren't ambitious, especially at this level. There's so many tough players and tough girls that are doing so well.

Yeah, it just means a lot. It makes me excited. I feel like it's going to give me more motivation going forward knowing I can win these big titles. I think it will give me a lot of confidence ending the year going into next year.

I'm sure I'm going to set new goals and everything, but definitely nice to set goals and achieve them. If you're ambitious, that's usually what you do.

**Q. We know you've been in one of your best performances in your career this year. Are we going to be speaking about Grand Slams next year?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I hope so. That's the next step, right? Hopefully, as long as I don't play Iga in the quarterfinals. Hopefully I'll get there (laughter).

I think it's going to give me a lot of confidence going into the Grand Slams.

**Q. Your mother called you her first sports team. How special is it to you to dedicate this first 1000 tournament to her, especially a rough year for her? Do you think you already gave more pressure to the Bills to win the Super Bowl?**

JESSICA PEGULA: A lot of good questions there.

My mom always kind of joked I was the first sports team as far as helping me with my tennis career growing up. I definitely wanted to dedicate it to her. She's had a really tough year. I know she was watching. I'm sure she appreciated that. Usually she gets very nervous watching, so it's special she got to watch me all week. That's really cool. I'm sure she was still very nervous.

As far as the Bills, yeah, I hope they win the Super Bowl. We're very heavy favorites. That would be amazing. I'd be in Australia if that happens. Hopefully if they're doing well, I'm still in the Australian Open, and that would be pretty cool.

**Q. I've noticed you were practicing a lot with David**

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**before the match, working on the backhand slice, giving you a lot of slices. Talk about the impact he's had on your rise.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I think he's incorporated a lot of intangibles, a lot of different things, not being afraid to try different things, just working on different shots that maybe I didn't think would be part of my game but now have become a crucial part of my game and helped me win a lot of extra points.

Yeah, in altitude I hit a couple good slices, came to the net. I knew with the fast conditions it's tough to pass here. Yeah, those are just little things. But I won some important points doing that.

I think he's made me a lot more comfortable as an all-around player. That's really helped figure different opponents out and go deeper in tournaments.

**Q. It was the first 1000 tournament for Latin America. Do you think the WTA should look more for Latin venues or tournaments?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I think it's shown that the fans definitely enjoy it. I think that's really special. I think they got good crowds it seems like every single day.

I know the players genuinely, they love coming here and feeling the fans. That makes it really special. For us, that's like the most fun part of playing, right, is to see the fans and feel the crowds with people screaming everyone's name. It's really cool.

Yeah, I hope we can come back to Latin America and they have more tournaments in Mexico and other areas because I think the fan base has shown they really appreciate the top players coming here.

**Q. Mine is the easiest question. I would like to ask if you can have a selfie with all the media? Would that be possible?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Sure. Let's do it.

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