

# Billie Jean King Cup: USA vs Belgium

Friday, April 12, 2024

Orlando, Florida, USA

USTA National Campus

## Team USA

**Captain Lindsay Davenport**

**Emma Navarro**

Press Conference



**CAPTAIN DAVENPORT:** It's been a learning week for me all the way around as I'm trying to figure out just getting to know some other players and figuring out this role. I'm going to stay out of Emma's way. I was talking to her too much in the first set. I was like, I'm going to back up from this.

Jess I felt like the opposite. She needed to really engage and really kind of get her energy going. There was parts where maybe she was a little hard on herself. We were trying to get her positive. When Jess is positive, she's moving and trying to get more aggressive. That was able to fire up for her. I think the bench did a great job with getting her ready for that.

Emma, anytime you play your first one, there's obviously nerves representing your country. She settled down in the second. She won the match herself. I wish I could say I helped, but this was all Emma.

**EMMA NAVARRO:** No, Lindsay definitely helped.

**Q. Emma, what were some of your emotions stepping on court?**

**EMMA NAVARRO:** Yeah, obviously playing for your country is a whole different ballgame, especially playing for the U.S., a country that I'm so proud to say I come from. Yeah, there's definitely a different level of just nerves and desire to do well. Dealing with that, for sure. Dealing with some physical stuff. Maybe the combination of both of those, it took me a while I guess to find my way out of that.

At one point I think it was in the second set, I told Lindsay, I can do this. What I kind of meant is I'm going to do this. I'll stay out here for as long as it takes and do whatever I need to do.

Yeah, I think it was just a really, really cool night for me. I'm always willing to make it ugly and get scrappy. I think that's kind of the beauty of this sport. It's great when you're playing well and things look pretty and they feel pretty, but I think it's nights like these that really count.

**Q. Was there a particular moment when you were down a set and a break? What did you feel flipped the**

E. NAVARRO/H. Vandewinkel

4-6, 6-4, 6-3

USA - 2

Belgium - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Lindsay, overall what are your takeaways from two hard-fought matches and wins?**

**CAPTAIN DAVENPORT:** Couldn't be more proud of my two ladies up here tonight. Really tough matches. We knew the Belgians were going to be tough. We weren't worried about rankings or ages or anything.

I think Jess said it earlier in the week. Everybody plays their best in this event. They played sensational. Two young, amazing players coming up from Belgium again.

My players fought. Both of them started off maybe not as well as they wanted to. Didn't affect either one of them. Emma down a set and 2-4, points to go down 3-5 in the second. She just never wavered, really stayed composed and positive. Then some just crazy crap in the third that I've never seen (laughter). She pulled through.

She's a champion. One of the reasons why I wanted her on my team was how well she competes, among a lot of other reasons. We saw tonight she's one of the best competitors.

**Q. Jess said you did a good job of keeping her locked in. What were some of the things you were telling them?**



**switch?**

EMMA NAVARRO: Yeah, I kind of had a little bit of a mindset switch. Like, there's no choice about how I have to play. When there is a choice, things get really complicated. Kind of that choice for me is how aggressive I'm being with my movement and how I'm taking shots on.

So, yeah, just trying not to waver from the aggressiveness of my movement.

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: We just kept trying to tell her, You got to keep hanging around, you got to keep waiting, you're going to get your chance to break.

Obviously Hanne was serving unbelievably. Some of those games she couldn't do anything. The whole team was just trying to encourage her to stick around, stick around. Once she got that first break, you could see, I think she won six games in a row at one point because she settled down, started reading the serve better.

Really you have to stay in there mentally to give yourself a chance, and that's exactly what she did.

**Q. You hit a squash shot late in the third set. Crowd got on their feet. Did you know you had that shot?**

EMMA NAVARRO: Yeah, whether you believe me or not, I hit it sometimes in practice when no one's watching. So, yeah, it was kind of my only option. At that point it's kind of do or die, so... I chose to do.

**Q. You lost a point in a very bizarre way. Have you ever lost a point like that?**

EMMA NAVARRO: Maybe when I was younger and my brother purposely pegged me at the net. No, that was ridiculous. Yeah, I don't know.

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: Only Emma, though, a break point to get up 5-3 gets hit by a ball going 10 feet out. Just wins the next two points like no problem. Anyone else would have been wrapped around what happened. Not her. That's part of what's so funny also. Did a great job handling that.

**Q. You had the injury timeout. Have you felt physically the effects of playing so many matches this year?**

EMMA NAVARRO: Apparently a little bit, which is hard for me to say 'cause I guess I have a lot of pride for just how I'm able to I guess push myself to the limits physically.

So, yeah, maybe a little bit, but nothing that's not manageable.

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: Is that your first injury timeout?

EMMA NAVARRO: First ever.

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: I'm like, It's okay, you can call her. After the set, you got to get some help. She didn't want to do it. First injury timeout.

EMMA NAVARRO: Yeah.

**Q. What do you do with all the clothes that you amass from your sponsors? What happens with those clothes?**

EMMA NAVARRO: Well, I've only been sponsored for maybe a year and a half. So I'm actually wondering the same thing.

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: Goodwill Sarasota.

EMMA NAVARRO: Really?

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: After they've been used.

**Q. What did you do with your outfits?**

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: I don't have any old ones, so I think I donated them, yeah. Once they've run the course of time, not wasteful in the beginning.

EMMA NAVARRO: I did give, like, probably 40, 50 pairs of shoes to a shoe charity. I'm not exactly sure, maybe Soles.

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: Soles, I was going to say that.

**Q. Captain Davenport, it's your first time as captain. There were two extraordinary victories. What was that like to navigate? You've coached individual players. At one point you got on the court and I thought the umpire said... What was that all about?**

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: Obviously it's my first day on the job officially. At one point she just said I walked a little too far from the bench. She was very nice. I didn't get in trouble. I said, Oh, my gosh, I'm sorry. She said it's something like three feet from the bench. Now I know that.

It was awesome. Again, these two are both warriors. Did they play their absolute best tennis? No. I think that's what makes it more special, they figured out ways to win against two players that played exceptional tennis. I do

believe in my heart two players you're going to be hearing more about in the future.

I remember in I believe it was 2000, we were pretty heavy favorites against a Belgian team, against two teenagers. I think it was Jennifer and I. It was Clijsters and Henin. Look what happened to them.

Both of these ladies got better at the bigger moments. That's all you can hope for as a captain.

**Q. Do you attribute that to Wim Fissette?**

CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: The Belgian team was ready to play, there's no question about it. We've seen them here all week practicing. They did a very good job.

At the end of day one we're up 2-0. We know we have one more match we're going to win tomorrow. We're going to talk about it as a team and get ready to hopefully win that first one at 2 p.m.

**Q. You seem like a fairly stoic player. How do you maintain that? What are your emotions now that you took the U.S. to 2-0?**

EMMA NAVARRO: Yeah, just feel really grateful for Lindsay putting me in this position, trusting me and my ability, putting me in singles.

Yeah, like I said on the court, it's just an honor to be able to play for her and the group of girls on the sidelines. It's just incredibly special. To be wearing USA colors, 'USA' on our jackets, it kind of became real when we put the tracksuits on for the draw ceremony the other day.

Yeah, it's an incredible honor to be in this position, especially get the win tonight. Yeah, I don't know. That stoic nature, I think it comes from my mom. She's, yeah, super cool, calm and collected. Of course, I have emotions. There's a lot of stuff going through my head in different moments.

I like to gather myself and be ready to play each point to the best of my ability. For me, that's kind of processing my emotions inwardly as opposed to outwardly.

**Q. Talk about the chemistry on your team. How important is that?**

EMMA NAVARRO: Yeah, a lot of these girls I really didn't know that well until this week. I'd see them around and practice with them, but haven't spent an extended period of time with these girls.

It's been such a blast getting to know them better this week, kind of forming those bonds that you can only form in times like these when there's a lot on the line. There's that sense of shared struggle, I guess, shared desire to achieve something great.

Same with Lindsay. I think we only met this year. Yeah, just really great getting to know her. If she wasn't before, she's definitely a role model for me and someone that I feel really grateful to have in my corner.

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