

Billie Jean King Cup: USA vs Belgium

Saturday, April 13, 2024

Orlando, Florida, USA

USTA National Campus

Team Belgium

Captain Wim Fissette

Press Conference



CAPTAIN FISSETTE: Honestly, in my coaching, I say so often, like, the moment when you really speak about the match and you try to prepare the players for the opponent but also all the challenges that might happen that day that they're going to face, just have them really ready to go on the court. That's so important in tennis. Not just with the young girls, but every player.

If a player has to go for a semifinal on a Grand Slam, it's also, like, the mindset you go on the court is really the key.

I really felt with both players, when I saw them before the match, they looked ready. I was really confident they were going to bring a great performance.

Obviously, I mean, the first time playing such good players, and me sitting on the bench helping them every two games, that obviously was a big bonus for them. That helped a lot.

Yeah, I'm super proud how they started the matches and how they mentally stayed strong in the matches.

Q. Was there any consideration of changing the lineup with Hanne?

CAPTAIN FISSETTE: She is super fit. We spoke the other day about her, like, combining med school. She's training very hard, like from a young age. Also physically, she's a very fit player. Usually she has 12 hours of sleep, so that was the only thing, yeah, that was difficult. But no, also with the performance she had yesterday, she also deserved a second match today. I felt she was ready.

I think, honestly, today was just playing No. 5 in the world tennis. Her serve was very accurate today. Her returns were always right on the baseline. From there on, she was just placing the balls so close to the lines. I mean, she was almost perfect today, so...

Q. Lindsay said both of your ladies got better at the bigger moments, and that's all you can hope for as a captain. Do you agree with that?

CAPTAIN FISSETTE: Yeah, that's really nice of Lindsay to say. I really agree on that. They brought their best serves on the biggest moments.

DOLEHIDE-TOWNSEND/Zimmermann-Benoit

6-3, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. In terms of the overall experience, for players as young as Sofia and Hanne, what are your overall takeaways from this weekend?

CAPTAIN FISSETTE: Yeah, I mean, I'm happy with the level they brought yesterday. I'm happy with the training week we had all together, the experience for them.

Yeah, for Sofia playing just yesterday, Hanne playing yesterday, it was a huge experience for them. Just to feel what it's like to play a top-10 player, top-20 player was just... I'm sure this will help them a lot in their further career.

I think this week was an inspiration for them and huge motivation to keep working hard.

Q. What are some of the things that you think a weekend like this can teach them?

CAPTAIN FISSETTE: I think our two players yesterday really brought, like, mental strength. I think they were mentally really tough. Also physically I really felt that they were able to keep fighting for every point until the last one.

Just quality of the tennis, quality of the shots, the serve, return, forehand, backhand. More quality on their shots, more depth, more percentage. Overall better players, more developed players.

Q. How did you get them so ready last night? Did that level surprise you?



I believe in these two girls. I know them since they're 10 and 11 years old. I've seen them making steps to where they are right now. It's really fun to see their development.

Yeah, I believe that they have the right mindset. They have high goals in their career. They're working super hard for that. Yeah, they also have the right confidence to go into matches like this and really believe that they can play their best tennis.

That's what they showed, so I'm super proud of their achievement.

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