

Yarra Valley Classic

Tuesday, 2 February 2021

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Ashleigh Barty

Press Conference



A. BARTY/A. Bogdan

6-3, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Well done tonight. Just talk us through how you felt out there on court in your first competitive tour match back.

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Yeah, it's certainly nice to be back, I think. Like I said, I've been getting a little impatient the last few months getting ready to play and preparing the way I love doing and getting ready kind of for all of the fun things that come with playing a competitive tennis match.

Really nice to be back out there today.

Q. What do you feel got better as the game went on tonight?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: I think overall I felt pretty good. I think Ana did an exceptional job in making me play to a very high standard. I knew right from the first point I was going to have to be ready tonight and switched on straightaway. That was really nice to have that challenge straightaway.

Obviously happy to come through reasonably unscathed and roll with the momentum pretty well.

Q. Is it a little bit of nerves with the double faults in serving for the match?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: I think it's natural. I mean, a couple of them I tried to do a little bit too much and then the third one I just went away from what was working.

I think bringing it back to what I knew was working and just not focusing on the result as much as more as trying to get the point structure in how I wanted and try to get that first ball how I wanted was massive throughout the whole match, but then doing that in the last game is always a little bit tricky when you haven't played in 12 months.

Q. I know you and Craig have been working on a few things through the sabbatical. How did you feel those went tonight under competitive pressure?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: I thought it was brilliant. I thought I was able to stick to the idea of what we wanted to do, stick to our game plan of what we wanted to do tonight to try and dissect Ana's game as best as we could. I thought it was solid throughout the whole night.

Of course there are always things I'm looking to improve after every match, after every performance. But without a doubt, happy with how it went tonight.

Q. Naomi was in here a day or two ago, and she was asked about you and she said that she wouldn't like to play you in a Grand Slam final. I think it was a positive thing. She said she'd find it a bit stressful. Have you ever thought about that? Would you like to play Naomi in a slam final? Would you like to avoid her? Is there anyone else you have ever envisaged playing in a Grand Slam final you'd like to meet?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: I think I'd be extremely fortunate to be in the position to be in another Grand Slam final. That's what we work for. That's why we do all the work through the preseason, eat all of our green beans, and then do all the right things to try and get to that point where we have an opportunity to win big titles and win Grand Slams.

Maybe I'll let you know once and if we get there again.

Q. Were you conscious at all about the no linespeople, or did that not worry you at all that you're not conscious of it?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Very bizarre. Actually played a doubles match a couple days ago, and while I was playing with Jen was trying to work out how it was all working.

But with singles it came a lot more naturally, and obviously you play the ball until the linesperson or the Hawk-Eye calls it out. The good thing is there's no challenging; it's right and wrong and off you go.

Q. You re-signed with Fila?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: I did.

Q. And how long is the new arrangements for, your

thoughts, comments on that, and the new logo? I think from memory you might be the first Australian player to actually have their own logo.

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Oh, that's really cool. Obviously my relationship with Fila has been fantastic over a number of years. It stemmed back to my first overseas trip as a junior, as a 13-year-old.

Fila as a company gave me my first-ever pair of clay court shoes. I didn't know there was a difference, hard court to clay court shoes. That stems back over ten years now where our relationship kind of first began.

Really exciting to sign with such an iconic company. Obviously we are really excited with our new logo. We've done a lot of work behind the scenes. I'm absolutely rapt with it.

Q. Did you come up with the logo or did Fila have input in?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: It's our logo. Obviously my team and I sat down and put our heads together. I feel like we've nailed it for what we want. I feel like it's great for me, and really excited that Fila has come on board and we're able to put on some clothes as well to give to young girls to try and get more young girls into the sport, enjoying the sport.

Really happy with that kind of an initiative just to kick it off.

Q. Speaking of young girls, there were a lot of them watching you in the crowd tonight. What does that mean for you?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: I'm very fortunate and very lucky and grateful to be able to play in front of a crowd, particularly here in Victoria. I know how tough it's been for so many Melbournians over the last 12 months. I really feel for them.

I feel like this is an opportunity for me just to be really happy on the court, enjoy it, enjoy the experience. And when I look up or when I hear young boys and girls, when I hear them in the crowd, it always makes me smile no matter how the match is going, no matter the result, knowing they are enjoying it just as much as I am.

Q. How different do you see your game or how comfortable are you feeling after having the hit in Adelaide, seeing where things were at there, playing doubles with Jen, and now getting a singles match in? Is there any sense of kind of, whew, it's there, what I need it to be is where it is right now?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Yeah, obviously there is a natural progression through that, and there is always that feeling

of uncertainty at the beginning of a season. That's the same for everyone.

But it was really nice to be able to share that with Simona when we were in Adelaide and genuinely walk out there and test ourselves and know that the level is there.

So I think for me that was in a sense relaxing, but also, I gain my confidence from the practice and the work that I do from Tyz in the offseason, not necessarily just the results and wins and losses.

I think being able to now get another opportunity tomorrow to continue to work on things and build to what will hopefully be a long and successful season will be really good.

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