

# Yarra Valley Classic

Friday, 5 February 2021  
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Serena Williams

Press Conference



S. WILLIAMS/D. Collins

6-2, 4-6, 10-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Talk us through the match today, third set tiebreak.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, it was a good match. I think Danielle is such an aggressive player, at least against top players in particular, so I knew that I was going to have to be ready for today.

She plays well. I knew it was going to be a good one. I'm glad I was able to get through that one in a tiebreak. Different but nice.

**Q. What was the look that you made to your box, Patrick, I don't know who, after the win? What was it meant to convey? I don't know whether it was a holy cow look or what.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I don't know. It was, like, finally I got through that, finally I hit a good angle, a winner, something like that.

**Q. A year ago not many of us had ever heard of COVID or coronavirus. Now it's a regular part of our vocabulary. Can you remember when and where you were when you first heard about this virus?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I heard about it here last year, but I didn't take it serious. I thought it was just in certain areas in the world. So it was that virus that's making a lot of people sick. I didn't think I knew the name of it. I didn't think it would spread.

After the tournament I heard about it in L.A. It was starting to get super serious. So I actually went into quarantine really early, like the second Indian Wells was canceled I was already in quarantine before then. I just went home and stayed by myself.

**Q. Is that because of your blood clot issue, you'd be more susceptible?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I mean, no one knows what

happens long-term. I think we're still going to find out what happens, which is really scary. Also I think having a sick child is one of the worst, hardest things to get through because you can't give them medicine, you can't really help them except for just hold them. It was really important for us to try to stay safe early on.

**Q. Playing Ash tomorrow, what are your expectations? Are you excited to play her?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think it will be a good one actually. I didn't know I was going to play her, but I was excited. I think it will be an opportunity for both of us to kind of get back in the swing of things. It's been a long 12 months. Tennis has been played but not really, so...

Hopefully this is like a new year where things will be different.

**Q. You've beaten off all manner of contenders over your career, every generation has been taken down by yourself in some form or another. Can you talk about the strength of the current crop of young stars, how confident you are that your best is still the best, if you know what I mean?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think the young players, all of them, first of all, they're really young (smiling). I was thinking today... Anyway, never mind. To be 30 (laughter), yeah. It was kind of funny.

But, yeah, I think it's just a new version of players. A lot of them have such a dynamic game, a lot of variety. Like Ash has such a good variety in her game. I think it brings a new level of tennis. I think it's really interesting.

**Q. Do you have confidence your best is still kind of the best in the world when you're 100% on your game? Is that still the best in the world?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I absolutely wouldn't be playing if I didn't think that.

**Q. Earlier today Ash was saying she would love to be playing you because she said whenever she plays you, it allows her to gauge where her game is. Are you in a similar situation when you come up against certain players, the current world No. 1 as well?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, absolutely. I think it's definitely a good opportunity to see where I'm going against the current No. 1. I think that's really important for me. Obviously I think for her, as well, to see where she's going against my game. I think I'm a pretty big player just on all surfaces. I think all around it's a really good opportunity for us both.

**Q. On the point of age, as you just said, to be 30.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: (Laughter).

**Q. Do you feel 38, 39, or do you feel 30? How old do you really feel?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I'm 39, right, I think? Yeah. I always get confused (laughter). I don't look it (smiling).

I don't know what it feels like to be that age. I just feel like me. I feel good. I look at Tom Brady, it's so inspiring. I don't know what athlete at what age is what any more. I think with all the new things, all the new technology, all the new physical treatments, rehab, things that you can do, I don't know what that age means any more.

Obviously it prolongs careers for so long.

**Q. It's just a number really?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I believe so, definitely.

**Q. Tom Brady was asked this week what his favorite championship was. He said, The next one. I was wondering if you can relate to that mindset?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I mean, that would absolutely be my answer, for sure. It's a great way to think.

**Q. Why?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Because otherwise you're living off of what you already did, yeah.

**Q. There was a video going around today of you showing off all of your trophies, I think it was in an interview or something. Everyone's reaction was that it looked like -- like the way we look for a fork in a drawer is the way you look at your trophies. I'm just kind of curious, at what point in your career did it get like that, where it was almost like there were too many trophies?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I have a lot of trophies in my other house, so that wasn't even honestly half of them.

**Q. Again, the fork drawer.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah (laughter).

Again, I don't know. When the announcer said on the court, 23 Grand Slam titles, seven Australians, he's like 14 doubles, then he starts talking about mixed doubles. I'm like, Geez.

It's a lot. I mean, even 14 Grand Slam doubles titles is a tremendous amount of wins. It's impressive. It's kind of cool.

But I've never been a kind of person that this has been my life. My life is way more than a trophy. There's way more to me than a championship, and away from the court.

For me, every time I step on the court I know I'm this tennis player, but at the same time I'm a mom, I'm a human. There's just so much more.

I don't know. I thought you were going to talk about the second place ones.

**Q. I wasn't ever going to bring that up.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Okay (laughter).

**Q. On the topic of playing Ash, I'm curious what your memories are at your last meeting? It was at Roland Garros when you were just coming back. Ash was kind of coming back as well. What do you remember of that match?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I think it was three sets. I remember just feeling really good getting through that match because she's obviously a good player on clay. I think she won the next year. It was good for me. I felt like I was starting to feel better in my game. I ended up getting to the finals of Wimbledon after that.

Yeah, so it was the beginning of me having some hard losses basically.

**Q. Many people have worked so hard to do this tournament through the pandemic. It's beautiful to see again fans in the stadium. As a player, what message will you send for all the people?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: That's a hard question. I just feel like it's great to play in front of people in general. It's been so different, you know, playing with no one in the stands.

But we'll see. I just think above all, like, the safety and the health is the most important thing for us globally. I think we just continue to have to take it one step at a time.

**Q. On the subject of your trophies. I watched that**



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**interview you did with Steven Colbert recently. You said you thought some of your majors were missing.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: No, it was one. After a wild -- not wild. After a get together.

But I don't know. My sister and I lived together for so many years so we always argue, Was that my Wimbledon trophy or was that her Wimbledon trophy. That argument is still going on. Like I think that's my Wimbledon trophy. She says it's her Wimbledon trophy, so...

I do have a stand with just like the little guy missing. Maybe I'll go to her house and grab one of hers (laughter). She's got enough of them. Conversations in the Williams home.

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