

# Sydney Tennis Classic

Tuesday, 11 January 2022

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

## Belinda Bencic

Press Conference



B. BENCIC/B. Maddad Maia

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to Sydney. How does it feel to get that first win of the season under your belt?

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, it feels nice obviously to start the new season with a good note. Very happy with how it went today. Yeah, obviously it's not easy playing the first match, but yeah, I'm happy how it went.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. As far as the match is concerned, you did look pretty solid on court. Did everything satisfy you? Were there aspects that you feel you really need to look into?**

BELINDA BENCIC: No, I felt very solid. That was also my game plan, to be solid today, not to look for something special or to experiment, because you still need some time to really get your confidence up. I didn't have much practice before this tournament, so that's why for me it was important to stay solid, to do what I play best. Yeah, just to really be focused on what I have to do and not try to do something special.

**Q. It was well documented or publicized with you falling ill with the Abu Dhabi event. Were you anxious when that happened? How are you feeling now?**

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, I mean, I don't know if I was anxious. I mean, I didn't get it for very long, and this was my first COVID infection. The only thing, I could feel it right away when I had, I knew something was just different.

I wasn't feeling too good, you know. I mean, obviously there is people that are hospitalized and everything, so I'm not comparing that to that, but still, you know, it was stronger than I kind of expected with me. I was struggling a little bit, you know, getting to practice after the COVID, because the pulse was getting up, and still the fatigue was still there. I was out of breath and everything.

Yeah, I didn't practice too much. You know, I took it very slow. I did all the tests I had to for the heart, for the lungs, and everything as an athlete I think you have to do that. Yeah, slowly to start, and that's why I didn't practice so much. Yeah.

**Q. But you feel pretty good now?**

BELINDA BENCIC: I feel okay. I think I still have room to feel better, and my fitness has to get better. I still feel a little bit like wobbly, and so I think there is still potential.

But I'm happy that I can play this tournament. I missed Adelaide, but yeah, happy I can play.

**Q. The Swiss have had some pretty good results at this tournament. Have you managed to look at the honor board at the stairway over there?**

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, I did actually. I mean, I feel like the Swiss have success everywhere, so it's nice to kind of, you know, be the next one trying to do the same (smiling).

**Q. Last year was a huge year for you with that gold medal in particular. How are you looking ahead to 2022 now?**

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, I mean, for me the gold medal is just everything, you know. Nothing will get bigger than that. I will trade every loss for this gold medal.

So for me it's really my baby. I'm not, you know, like I have nothing to lose this year. Like for me this mentality by winning the gold medal feels like I'm more free now. You know, like I have nothing to prove anymore. Also to myself, because I really, really wanted that big title.

Now I just feel like it's done and I can enjoy. I can, you know, start to look at my next goals, but I don't feel any pressure by it whatsoever.

I think that's a good thing, but still I have more goals and more dreams to reach. Hopefully I can, yeah, continue in that.

**Q. You had very good matches in Australia in 2020 and 2021. Again, gold medal in Tokyo Olympics 2021. Now, how do you feel playing here in Australia**

**in 2022? What is your confidence level?**

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, I mean, I feel very good playing here. I really enjoy it. You know, it's the start of the season. Normally I really need a little bit of time to get into it, but I feel very good here.

I have been playing. I think I have had some good results here in Australia, and that's why I'm very happy that again I can play here in Sydney. I definitely wanted to have at least one warmup tournament.

Yeah, hopefully, I mean, the most important one of course is Australian Open, so hopefully I can do well there, as well.

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