

Sydney Tennis Classic

Thursday, 13 January 2022

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Paula Badosa

Press Conference



P. BADOSA/B. Bencic

7-6, 3-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Tough match. A long, hard match. What do you think made the difference today?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, it was quite tough today. I was expecting that against a player like Belinda.

I think I had to get used a little bit on the conditions. It's totally different playing outside than in center court. It's much faster. The ball flies a little bit more.

I think the key was to stay fighting until the end, like I always try to do, accepting her good moments, because I think she played amazing and I had a lot of chances and I wasn't taking them.

Then I think in the third set I was going for it, very aggressive, and that's what gave me the match.

Q. If you had to examine your own game tonight, what would you think satisfied you the most?

PAULA BADOSA: The fight, like always (smiling). No, besides that, I think I was quite aggressive when I had to be, because she's a very aggressive player, so I went for it, especially in the third set. So I'm quite happy about that today.

Q. Into the semifinals now, which is obviously very pleasing. What are your thoughts on facing Kasatkina in the next round?

PAULA BADOSA: Well, it's a tough match, completely different as today. It's going to be a tactic match, a physical match, as well. She's playing good. She won very good matches.

So another tough one, but I'm ready for it.

Q. Does it matter that you have never played her before?

PAULA BADOSA: Well, no. It's a new goal, a new

experience. It's going to be a challenge. I know it's going to be tough. I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. Have you seen or heard about the Australian Open draw for yourself, or would you not rather know at this point?

PAULA BADOSA: Yes, I already saw it. I'm not superstitious. When I see it, I just say, Okay. It's far away. I still have to play tomorrow.

But, yeah, I saw it was Ajla again, so I'm expecting a tough match, as well. She's playing at home. It's always special for her when she plays at home. She has that extra motivation.

I will try to get ready for that, but for the moment I want to be focused here.

Q. I asked Dasha this question before, because you guys are the same age. Do you remember the first time that you ever saw her, met her? Apparently you guys haven't played even as juniors, but do you remember knowing her on the junior circuit?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, of course. Maybe it was under-12 in the World Cup? She was playing for Russia; I was playing for Spain. I remember her there.

I have pictures of 13 years old together. We were very close friends when we see each other in tournaments. So, yeah, I know her family and everything. She's a very nice girl. I'm happy that we both made it here. It's nice to see her as well here, playing in the semifinals now.

Q. With the win over Bencic and the way you did it, three sets, coming through a tight third set, how much confidence does that give you at the start of the season to get a win like that? Do you feel like it boosts you to be, you know, more confident than you would have been otherwise going into the Australian Open?

PAULA BADOSA: For sure. Winning matches gives you confidence, and I think I had quite tough matches in this tournament and the tournament before.

I never like to lose first rounds, even though last week it was against Azarenka and she played an amazing level.



But even though, it doesn't give you confidence. I really wanted to come here and to play and to try to win matches. The first match was very important for me for that to give me self-confidence.

So now I made it to semifinals, and you can see things are a little bit more different, even more when you just won a tough match like that and on that high level.

Q. And then just physically, are you feeling okay going into the semifinals? I saw a little bit of strapping in your last match and stuff like that. Is it worrisome or just something you're managing?

PAULA BADOSA: Well, I'm trying to manage it as much as I can. I'm struggling a little bit with my shoulder since some months ago. I'm trying to find the solution.

But for the moment, I can play. Physios do very good job here in the WTA, so I'm happy about that. But I have to take care of it a lot, because I don't know what it is. I'm struggling a little bit, yeah.

Q. You had good matches in 2021: Charleston Open, Madrid Open, Serbia Open, and then you won Indian Wells title. How are your preparations going on, and how do you look at that for 2022?

PAULA BADOSA: Well, I'm looking forward to do a little bit more than last year. What can I ask? I always want to do more. I think I did an amazing year.

It's tough, and it's different. Going into tournament as a favorite, I have to be honest, because I feel everyone is playing really good against me right now and like they have nothing to lose, so it's a little bit the other side that I was playing maybe last year and I was the other side of the opponent and had nothing to lose and now it's a little bit different.

So I'm feeling kind of different pressure this year, so I think it's going to be a very, very high challenge, and it's going to be a goal for me if I can do like the same year as last one, because it's going to be tough this year, I can imagine, because today was very, very tough and the other matches were very tough.

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