

# Brisbane International

Wednesday, 1 January 2025

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

## Kimberly Birrell

Press Conference

K. BIRRELL/E. Navarro

7-5, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Kim, congratulations. How does it feel to get to your second top-10 win?

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, it's pretty crazy. It hasn't been too long, so it hasn't really sunk in yet, but super happy. Really special to get another big win here at my home tournament.

Couldn't be happier. Thanks. Still puffing from the stairs, sorry. (Laughter.)

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Congratulations. It was only three months ago that you met in Hong Kong and she got you in straight sets. What was the difference today?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, I think it really helped me that we had played before. Yeah, during that match I wasn't too happy with my level, but even so, in the second set I had chances. So I definitely identified some things that I could have done better down at my end of the court, and I guess I knew what I needed to do, and I knew I needed to play really well today.

I guess it's kind of like one of those situations where you have no choice, you just have to go for it. That was kind of the attitude I had going into today. And obviously having felt her ball not too long ago, I think that really benefited me, along with having played a lot of hours on this court here (smiling).

**Q. You were broken when you were serving for both sets, so what goes through your mind in that situation? You come close but you need to build yourself straight back up, and you did, straightaway you were back into it.**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, yeah. Obviously a little bit of frustration, because you do kind of like all the hard work, and then to get broken back right away, you know how they say, it's not a break until you hold. But, yeah, I just tried to not think too much about it.



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I think my serve, although it's improving, it hasn't really been one of my strengths in my game, and I think that my return is one of my strengths. So I kind of just put that previous game the back of my mind and move on, and great, now I get to return, I feel comfortable, I know what I need to do.

Yeah, I was just kind of taking it one point at a time, and was really glad that I got to serve for it again, especially down the same end of my box. I think that really helped keep my calm, yeah.

**Q. It's going to be either Potapova or Yastremska. You've played Yastremska twice, both on grass.**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yes.

**Q. Once more recently than others.**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah.

**Q. Too early to say do you have a preference, but given that you've played her recently, maybe there is a bit of confidence you can take again being on your home court?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, definitely. Well, at this level tournament, everyone is a great player, and I just will continue to keep backing myself and keep enjoying every second playing here at home in front of my friends and family. I don't have a preference. I'll just see what happens with their match and prepare like I always do, like it's any other match. Yeah, I hope that I can continue to play well.

**Q. Four or five years ago you were doing some work with the media team. Can you remember what it was like at that stage of your career...**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah.

**Q. ...how far away this moment felt and whether you felt it was curtains? Can you reflect on that?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, at that time when I was working for the tournament instead of playing in the tournament, I gained so much experience and realized how big of a sport tennis is, and it was really cool to be on the other side and experience all of that.

It gave me, I guess, the chance to reflect and realize that I did really want to keep playing, and then obviously didn't expect to be out, injured for so long. That was sort of at the beginning of my injury. Then I had almost two more years of rehab ahead of me at that time, so there were definitely periods where I didn't know if I was going to get back on court let alone at the level I played today.

So I'm really glad that I persevered and so lucky to have amazing friends and family that helped me during that period to get back to where I am today.

**Q. Psychologically, to be the beat a top-10 player, it's just a number, but does it mean more, feel better?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, I think, as you said, it's just a number. Going into the match today, I definitely reminded myself of that. She had an unbelievable year last year and absolutely deserves to be ranked where she is, but, you know, especially at the beginning of the season, anything can happen.

Yeah, I will definitely take a lot of confidence from today and just knowing that I can do it, and you always believe in yourself, but then to actually get wins on the board, I think it definitely helps.

**Q. Massive congratulations, first off, but you're a couple wins away from that top 100 again.**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Thanks for reminding me.  
(Laughter.)

**Q. How do you reflect on missing out on an Australian Open wildcard?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: To be honest, I didn't think too much about it. Probably one of the first years that it didn't really play too much on my mind. I actually had a little feeling that I may not get one, because there were so many of us that did need it and we are all ranked around the same, had great years, and we do have some amazing juniors coming up through the ranks.

When I was their age, I was given some opportunities from TA, so yeah, I can only worry about myself and my preseason and the training and what I needed to work on. That's what I did. Super happy for all the girls that received them.

I was kind of glad when I found out that I could just move on and, as I said, focus on the process. I think it's great to be playing quallies. I qualified at the US Open, so I have belief that I can do it and can't wait to get to Melbourne.

**Q. You have done it before, and you have obviously done well this week. You must feel good about your chances of getting through?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, definitely. Obviously anything can happen, but really proud of the way that I'm playing and putting together what I have been working on on the practice courts. Yeah, hopefully I can keep it going and get there on my own (smiling).

**Q. How big is the convoy that goes up the M1 every two days this week to get here and support you?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, well, just living down the road on the Gold Coast, it's really, really cool that obviously my parents and my brother have been up here every day, so they have put some Ks in their cars. They have been doing that this week but so much throughout my career.

I think every parent of an athlete can relate to how much driving they have to do to their kids' training. My mom used to drive me up here pretty much every day after school from the Gold Coast, so she knows that road very well. I think she could probably do it with her eyes closed, yeah (smiling).

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