

Adelaide International

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Adelaide, South Australia, Australia

Jessica Pegula

Press Conference



J. PEGULA/B. Pera

4-6, 6-2, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations on your win today. Can you share your thoughts on the match?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, it was a really tough match today. Kind of to be expected. I feel like Bernarda, she always plays well against me, and she's been playing well. Obviously even coming in as a lucky loser kind of gives you the ability to play really free, especially winning her first round against Paula, so was glad I got through.

Q. How would you categorize the first set? Did you feel it was just a bit of a hiccup?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I had so many games where I was up 40-Love, lost two of those games being up 40-Love, which is not good, and then I even think 30-Love or 40-15 one more time, and it just like -- I felt like if I was able to get up in those games, maybe the score line would have been different. You never know.

But I think I just kind of kept letting her back into the match, and then she started playing really well and playing super free. I definitely did a better job of that the second and the third set, but the first set for sure, I think I -- of course maybe one game, okay, she comes back, she plays a good game from down Love-40, but to have as many break points as I did, and I think that was kind of the different with the score line in the first.

Q. What do you think clicked to get it turned around? I know it was a tough match through, but that score line of 2 and 3 was a little bit more relaxed or comfortable?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I think I just tried to play a little bit more aggressive, tried to get a little bit more depth on my ball. I tried to play her deep up the middle because I felt like every time I gave her an angle she would come up with some really good shots and try and serve a little bit smarter when I could. She was returning well, so I was trying to jam her a lot and take away her angles, so I think making a couple small adjustments like that won me some free points in the second and the third.

Q. Going into a major and especially the year's first major, I know you've played a fair amount through United Cup, but is a match like that of benefit, or would you rather the mold be pretty straightforward?

JESSICA PEGULA: I was talking about it with my coach, I was like, the three matches I've played this year have been super tough. I feel like the girls are playing at a super high level and hitting the ball so clean and being really aggressive. I've had some really tough matches.

Yeah, I'm happy -- I think I'm happy that I've gotten tough matches because it's always hard when you haven't been in those situations and then you throw yourself into a Slam in those situations, it's really tough. You always feel great and it's easy to win when you're winning on a easy score line.

I don't mind the tough matches now. I think that's the whole point of playing these events is to be tested however it is. Obviously I don't want to do that when I'm out there, but when you're in the situation and you can figure it out and use that going into a Slam, I think that's really helpful.

Q. Now just a few days to go before the Open starts, how are you feeling having had all these matches? Do you feel there's still a way to go with what you want to -- the level you want to be at? How do you feel generally?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I think like the last two sets were better. I thought I served better. Same thing when I played Ajla at United Cup. Second set I didn't think I played that well but then I thought I played good the second set. So I feel like it's there. I'm having swings where I'm playing really well and maybe just losing focus or maybe just not match tough, not competing, whatever it is, or other girls playing well, too, at the beginning of the year, feeling pretty free.

No, I think I feel like I'm in a good spot. I think especially today, the last two sets, I was up in the first set, as well. Like I'm putting myself in good position every single time, so I think it's just trying to stay focused and hopefully clean up some of those games or loose errors.

Q. Obviously every player wants to win a major going into a major. Have you considered what your

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JESSICA PEGULA: Don't ask me the same question. Did you ask me last time what I had to do to make a semi? I was like, win my quarterfinal. But that was going to be my answer again.

Q. Have you set yourself a goal or target that you feel you must have to get to that level to feel it's been some sort of a success?

JESSICA PEGULA: At a Slam?

Q. At the Australian.

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I think making second week is always your first goal, winning every match and then making second week. I like doing little incremental goals like that so I don't look too far ahead, but I think if it doesn't pan out, you don't make second week, you lose first round, you lose third round, whatever it is, I don't think you can really look at it as a failure.

I mean, I'm sure if you lost and you're in a bad mood, you think of it like that, but in the long-term, like looking at it that way I don't think is super healthy, so I don't think I've ever looked at a Slam that way, as being a failure because I'm not winning it. I think you just -- tennis is tennis. You've just got to pick up and move on and go towards the next week and try to use every week to improve.

But of course for the players and myself that want to win a Slam, yeah, it's a bummer if you don't achieve your goal. But a lot of us are used to that.

Q. What do you have to do to get to a semi?

JESSICA PEGULA: You know my answer.

Q. But on a serious note, looking ahead over here to the next round, I think the girls are still on court. If you look at both players individually, what are your thoughts going in against Pavlyuchenkova and Siniakova?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I feel like when they're playing well, they can be on, super on. I've played Siniakova several times. A couple tough matches, a couple that went easier my way. Pav, I haven't played her in a while, but I think we had a three-set match the last time I played her.

They both play I think pretty aggressive. Both return really well. I think it's going to be another tough match. I'll just go out there and whoever wins I'll do my best to strategize and hopefully execute a clean match.

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