

Adelaide International

Thursday, 15 January 2026

Adelaide, South Australia, Australia

Victoria Mboko

Press Conference



V. MBOKO/M. KEYS

6-4, 4-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Vicky, congrats. Just your thoughts on the match.

VICTORIA MBOKO: Yeah, well, it's not easy playing a top-10 player. Of course, going into the match I knew Madi was going to be very difficult to play, so I wanted to bring my A game. I just stayed really focused from the beginning. She had her moments. I had my moments. But at the end of the day I was glad I was able to pull out the win and get the job done.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Did you feel like most of the match was on your racquet? Did you feel like you controlled the tempo, particularly in the first set, that you were the one who was setting the pace?

VICTORIA MBOKO: Actually, not really. I feel like she hits a pretty heavy ball, and pretty hard. I felt like I was kind of trying to stay in there with her as much as I can, that was my mentality at least.

She hits a pretty strong ball, and all I was thinking in that moment was just to try to stay low and try to redirect as much as I could, and try to, yeah, either make her miss first or have a good opportunity to take control.

Q. What did you feel perhaps let yourself down in the second set, and how were you able to recover in that third set?

VICTORIA MBOKO: Yeah, well, I think there was a moment where we were kind of neck and neck. She had two games where she was returning really well and was able to find the lines and the little spaces, hit quite a bit of winners on me. I could say it got a bit discouraging at the time, but I still wanted to try to fight back and stay in the match as much as I possibly could.

Unfortunately, she got the second set, but starting the third set I wanted to try to get back the momentum.

Q. The strapping on your leg, what was the story

behind that?

VICTORIA MBOKO: It's more preventative. Yeah, I had a pretty long match against Kalinskaya in the round before, and wasn't feeling great yesterday. So just to tape it up, and just be more preventative, and just make sure it's stable, so I don't further injure it.

Q. These three-setters, are you enjoying the three-setters or do you want an easy one every now and then?

VICTORIA MBOKO: No, not really (smiling.) But, hey, I mean, whatever gets the job done. It happens. But maybe I can try to find some straight set wins soon.

Q. You were ranked about 300 spots lower this time last year, I guess. Have you sort of got your head around what the past year has been like? Has it been a blur for yourself, or are you just sort of taking it each day as it comes?

VICTORIA MBOKO: Yeah, I've been pretty much taking it each day as it comes. But I feel like also last year went by so fast, so, then again it was all kind of a blur.

I kind of had to adjust and adapt very quickly from playing ITFs to suddenly playing on the WTA tour full. Yeah, often playing top players, and you have to get used to all of that.

So I'm glad I can kind of get a deep run in this tournament, and try to set the tone for the start of this year.

Q. I guess you're ready for maybe the extra expectations that might come with this recent run, obviously the past year and then at Adelaide International, but, yeah, I guess there's going to be more expectations on you come the Australian Open; are you ready for that?

VICTORIA MBOKO: Probably, yeah. I mean, it comes with all the players, it's not just me. That's the beauty of the game. I mean, if you're going to do well you're going to have expectations, so it's a positive thing at the end of the day. I don't want to take it in a way where you have to win or you have to do this, but you just want to always improve each day.

I feel like I'm at the very beginning of my career, so I don't want to set these unrealistic standards for myself. But of course I want to do well for myself, and I want to perform well.

Q. Tomorrow going against Australia's Kim Birrell. Have you played her before? Do you know much about her game?

VICTORIA MBOKO: Yeah, I played her in the first round of Montreal last year. She's a super solid player. I'm expecting a big fight tomorrow. She also has the crowd advantage, so that's good for her. But I'm going to just go in the match like I do every other match, and just stay right in there, try to play my game, and just have fun on court.

Q. The crowd, obviously it will be against you in a nice way, but are you able to stay in your bubble and block that out do you hope?

VICTORIA MBOKO: Yeah, I mean, I played so many times where the crowd's against me. It's a part of the sport and it happens. I mean, every player who plays in their country is going to have the home crowd support, so it's completely normal. Yeah, at the end of the day I just want to focus on what I have to do on court.

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