

# Roland Garros

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## Kaja Juvan

Press Conference

K. JUVAN/A. Kerber

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THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. The Slovenian athletes are dominating the headlines in the last few weeks. Primož Roglič, Tadej Pogacar. What is the secret of the athletes in 2020? When will we have a Slovenian team winning the football Champions League?**

KAJA JUVAN: That's a hard question. I mean, of course, football players are working really hard.

But I think it's just that we're such a small country, so you really have to believe in yourself. We're not the biggest. We don't have the biggest foundation or the best conditions.

But we work with what we have and put all of our hearts in it. I think that's what makes a lot of the athletes from Slovenia good, great.

**Q. Talk about your preparation for this match. What was your mentality going into it? What was your game plan? What was your reaction to drawing Angie in the first round?**

KAJA JUVAN: Well, actually it doesn't really matter for me who I get in the draw. I'm trying to focus on my game. But obviously when you're playing with great players that have many titles, in your head it's like, Okay, okay. I watched her on TV when I was little. On the other hand you're like just focus on myself.

I knew what I had to do. We prepared well. We did, like, the tactics. But at the end we waited for, like, three hours for the match because the men's before it was way long. We were just trying to stay warm. At the end I think I was trying to stay aggressive. I think that's what brought the win at the end.

She's a really great player. She's really hard to play against.

**Q. What does a win like this mean to you? First round, Roland Garros, over Angie. What's the**



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**significance of today?**

KAJA JUVAN: I guess it was mostly how I handled the situation. It was just that I wasn't afraid of it. Obviously the match last year against Serena helped me to stay calm in this match.

But it's a new motivation. This year is really tough. It's really tough for everyone. Here it's cold and it's wet. You got to keep warm and move your body. It's mostly about who handles it best. I think this year we're all just trying to play some tennis, get some matches, and survive this year. That's the main goal.

**Q. Does it feel that much different this year playing at Roland Garros and why?**

KAJA JUVAN: It's much colder this year. Last year I had to play quallies. I feel like I got some good matches. I played with Coco Gauff last year. I got to play on Suzanne Lenglen in the first round. I guess this is my first win in main draw at Roland Garros.

But it's mostly the atmosphere. I miss the crowd, the fans. It's completely different. As I said, it's who can handle the conditions best. So I was just trying to focus on myself and enjoy the game.

I think I stayed pretty disciplined this match which is something that got me the win at the end.

**Q. Do you know Tadej Pogacar and Primož Roglič personally?**

KAJA JUVAN: Actually there's, like, a sports event at the end of the year in Slovenia that crowns the best sportsman. I got to meet Primož Roglič. He's a great guy. He actually congratulated me for everything. I was pretty starstruck because he's the best cyclist in the world. Tadej is also. He got the award for the new up-and-coming sportsman at that time. I didn't get to meet him because he wasn't there. But I got to meet his parents. I guess I know the parents.

Yeah, they're pretty great. In Slovenia I feel like all the sportsmen know how hard you have to work to get somewhere. As I said, financially and also because we're so small, you don't get anything for free. We know how hard it is. Everyone is super nice. We try to help each other as much as we can.

**Q. You wrote each other after the Tour de France?**

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KAJA JUVAN: I mean, my coach wrote them. I don't know if they got the message. I know they were pretty overwhelmed, both of them. I didn't want to disturb them too much in their flood of messages that came for sure. But I think they know that I wish them well, that they're doing something amazing for our country and also for their sport.

**Q. Talk about your preparation for clay this year. What was your transition like from the U.S. back to Europe training on clay? How much did the summer hard court series you played help you at all?**

KAJA JUVAN: Actually in Slovenia we practice mostly on clay courts through the whole quarantine because there are many more clay courts in Slovenia than there are hard courts. We didn't know what was going to happen, if the US Open is going to be. I don't know which month it is any more. For four months we practice on clay.

I did a lot of fitness training, which I didn't get the chance to do such a big amount of time to put into that. Then it was quite funny because we went to Palermo and Prague. We were practicing for that. Then, bam, US Open, hard court season.

My mind was kind of on clay this year. I mean, US Open is great. I'm getting more familiar with hard courts. I like playing on them. But then you come home, you come to Europe, it's more familiar. I just love it. I love it here. It's a lot, lot closer to where I am.

It was interesting. Except for, like, the whole cold and wet thing, I feel like this is a great tournament this year. They managed to get through a big part of it already without having to stop for a while, which was the forecast. It's pretty nice right now.

**Q. When you talked about putting in the training block, where do you feel that work translates now when you play? Faster, is it in strength, lasting longer?**

KAJA JUVAN: I guess it's just my body. I feel it's a lot stronger. I feel like I have a lot more muscles so I can stay in, like, points a bit longer. I'm not trying to get out of points faster, which was a little problem last year.

But it's just everything. We had so much time. I had too much time during quarantine. Every day I was in the gym for three hours. I wasn't even working the whole three hours, I was just sitting there. We had a really long time, a lot of work.

I feel like I'm safer, if that makes any sense, with injuries. They're going to still happen, but I feel like it's not because I'm not well-prepared right now. That's what

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