

Roland Garros

Saturday, 3 October 2020

Paris, France

Leylah Fernandez

Press Conference

P. KVITOVA/L. Fernandez

7-5, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. A few hours after the match now, what are your thoughts? How do you feel about how everything went especially after going up the double break?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: Very disappointed. Today I just made too many mistakes when I was up, gave her momentum going back in. Then, you know, things happened. I just didn't follow my coach's game plan that they gave me in the beginning of the match. Too many mistakes here and there on key moments.

Q. What can you take from this tournament going forward for the season to come?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: Well, what I can take mostly from today's match is just the way she fought, the way she played. Next time that we play against each other or next time that I play a top player like her in a Grand Slam, it will definitely be different. I'll be playing a lot better, making less mistakes, being more of let's say a professional and follow my coach's game plan.

Q. Looking at what you've achieved this year at Roland Garros and last year, you obviously are playing great on clay. Why is that do you think? Have you played much on clay as you've grown up?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: No, I have not. I don't know why I play better on clay. I love the surface. I'll always feel like my game and the style of game that I was taught from a very young age, it was great for here in this clay court in Roland Garros. Especially with the variation, the way I'm offensive most of the time, is helping me here.

Q. When you practice in Florida, there are no clay courts there?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: There are clay courts, but it's green clay. I normally practice on hard court. Let's say 70% of my season is on hard court.

Q. You were talking about your coach's game plan.



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What was the game plan to beat Petra Kvitova today?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: Well, that's something private. Maybe next time I'll be executing and it will work and you guys will see a difference (smiling).

Q. At the net, Petra did say a few things to you, I'm sure some pretty nice things. What did she say? What is it like to play someone like Petra on a big stage like this who hits the ball so hard?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: Well, Petra is a great competitor. She told me congratulations and good luck for the future, which was very nice of her. I've admired her since I was very young. To be playing against her in Suzanne Lenglen was a big opportunity for me. Unfortunately I didn't execute what I needed to do.

Q. On being in Florida, when your family moved there a few years ago, was that mainly to help you and your sister with your tennis?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: Yes, 100%. It was just for tennis.

Q. What age were you when you moved there?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I was probably around 15, 16. When I was 15 I was still living in Montreal, playing there with my ex-coach. My younger sister was there for a few years. She's been training at a few academies, playing with different players, which was great. When I decided to go back with my family for better training, for a different environment, it was just a great idea.

Q. A question about soccer. I gather you played soccer at one time. Your father was a soccer player as well. What level did he play at?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I think there's some rumors he played on the professional circuit, but he's not telling me any details. He just told me that he's focused on his girls. He has three girls. He wants them to succeed in life. Trying to make them as independent women in the future.

I think it's a great idea from him.

Q. Would you have been a great footballer?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: You never know. For example, last year was very funny. There was the women's World



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Cup here in France. We saw the Canadian team playing on TV. My dad and I, we made a joke saying, Imagine if I would have pursued soccer instead of tennis, I might have been here in the same year playing the World Cup.

You never know.

Q. Three Grand Slam main draw appearances this year. How will you use these experiences as growth going forward?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I've been improving every Grand Slam. I've won one round extra than the last one so it's good. I know what I need to work on. There's obviously a lot of things I got to work on today for the future, which that's what we're going to do in Florida.

Q. Take us into the late stage of the first set and early in the second, what Petra did well that was making it harder?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I think I was making some mistakes, and Petra was just using that, started hitting a few winners on key moments.

But like I said, there's a lot of things I got to work on. It's shown on the match. That's what we're going to do for the future. Hopefully next time that we play each other, it will go on my side. But you never know.

Q. You obviously speak many different languages. What language do you speak generally at home? When you're with your sister, what language would you speak?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: At home we would speak a lot of Spanish. With my sister, it would vary between English and Spanish. Sometimes with my mom, she doesn't understand a lot of Spanish or French, so we communicate in English. With my coach, he speaks in French so we would speak French on the tennis court.

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