

# Roland Garros

Saturday, 12 June 2021

Paris, France

## Barbora Krejckikova

### Press Conference

B. KREJCIKOVA/A. Pavlyuchenkova

6-1, 2-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: We have our 2021 Roland Garros champion here. We will start with questions. First question for the champion, please.

**Q. This is obviously the greatest moment of your professional career. Can you just put into words your emotions, feelings. What does 'Barbora Krejckikova, Roland Garros Champion' sound like?**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: Happy. I'm extremely happy. I mean, it's a dream come true, for sure. It's really hard to put the words together right now because so many emotions, so many things going through my mind.

I'm just really happy that I was able to handle it as I did, that mentally I think that was the biggest key. I spoke with my psychologist again, and we spoke about it a lot. Like I just knew that as soon as I'm going to enter the court, I'm just not going to be panicking anymore. That was actually happening. I was really happy about that.

I mean, it's something I have always dream about, winning here, my first doubles title, then some doubles title, then winning the mixed ones. Now I was just telling myself, It would be really nice if I can get the Grand Slam in all three categories.

Now it's happening. I cannot believe it. Now it's happening. Wow.

**Q. A lot happening for you in singles. Singles is a much bigger profile than doubles on the tour. Are you at all wondering how your life is going to change from this? You went from being outside top 100 less than nine months ago to now being a Grand Slam champion, a big figure in the Czech Republic? How do you think your life is going to change?**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: I don't know. I'm not really expecting anything. I don't know. Who knows. I mean, I just want to be me. I just don't want to change. I just want to still be me.

I'm not planning to change, not planning to do anything



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different. I'm just planning to work hard again. This is such a big motivation to just work hard, enjoy this journey, enjoy tennis and everything.

Yeah, I guess a lot of things going to change. For me, I'm just going to still be the little girl from my city, from my little city, that used to start on the tennis wall. Probably nothing's going to change.

**Q. I talked to a photographer here who have been shooting tennis for 30 years, 40 years. He told me the way you hit the ball, the way you construct the point, looks similar to Jana. Do you agree with that? Have you ever tried to imitate how she hit the ball?**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: Well, I mean, we used to work on some things together, but I never tried to really imitate her. I think everybody is special. I never did that.

We were actually working on a lot the slices. I feel like I was really using it also today but also during all those other matches. I think the slice is really difficult. I don't know. It's very nice. It's very nice that people think this. For me it's really warming my heart.

I mean, it's not that I was just trying to imitate somebody.

**Q. We know lots about you on the court now. Can you tell us a bit about you off the court. What are your other interests, passions, apart from tennis?**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: It's tough. I actually like tennis. I have my family. I like to spend time with my family. I have my two brothers. One of them is here. One of my brothers has kids, so I'm already aunt. I have a niece and nephew. Every time I come back home, I love to spend time with them.

I mean, back home I like to hang out with my friends. I actually like to go to the tennis where is my very first tennis coach. I really like to talk to him. I mean, on the other hand, I don't know, I like to watch movies. I like to sleep (smiling). I'm actually doing, like, a sewing, I don't really know how to say it in English, but that's something I do. It keeps me really, really calm. It's actually something fun for me to do.

I don't know. When I'm back home, I like to help my parents in the garden. We do the gardening, just cutting the grass, things like this. I don't know. There are, like, a lot of things. It's hard to actually say out loud.

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I don't know. I like driving. I like cars. I don't know. What else? I mean, like right now this is pretty much the things I like. I like to eat (laughter). I like good food. That's something, when I have the time, I really like to go for a nice steak.

What else? I like to hold this trophy, for sure. That's something I'm going to do and I'm going to enjoy. I don't know. That's it, I think (smiling).

**Q. You mentioned earlier today that you said you had a conversation with your sports psychologist about not being nervous. Could you tell us a little more about that. Was that after today's match or before? There's been a recent history of a lot of first-time Grand Slam champions winning the women's title here in Paris. Some people have different theories about why. Do you have a guess as to why?**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: I'm going to answer the second one because I don't remember the first one anymore.

The second one, I don't know. I don't know. I think it's very nice organization here. I mean, the courts are nice. The surface is a clay. I don't really know if there is something special about it. Why is it happening, why so many players are first Grand Slam champions here. I don't know. But I'm happy that I'm part of them.

What was the first question?

**Q. About the psychologist.**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: Okay, yeah, I mean, I've been actually talking to her before every single match that I play since I played Sloane. It was really difficult. It was really hard. I've never been in a situation like this, not in the singles. I was a little bit panicking. I really wanted to win.

On the other hand, I knew that if I really want to win, I'm just going to put so much pressure on myself, it's not going to happen. We had the conversation about this. She just told me just to go and enjoy. We spoke about how to talk to myself, what to do when I'm going to feel nervous on court. Like simple things, what to do.

Also she gave me a lot of, like, courage to actually go on court, just be happy that I'm actually there. All of this that already I'm in the finals, it's a big achievement that nobody really expected, not even me. I didn't expect it as well. She just told me, Just be happy, just go out there. It's going to be finals, but just take it as a regular match, pretty much as a practice match that you just want to improve.

That's it. Just go with this attitude and you see. You're going to make it or it's going to come next time.

**Q. After the match you gave an inspirational speech. You said you made the decision to spend time with your inspirational mentor, Jana Novotna, at the end of her life. Why did you decide to do that? And what did you get from that experience?**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: Jana was really special to me. She was really special. She pretty much just told me, Go and play pro. When I was 18, I actually finished juniors, I didn't really know what to do. There was a time when I approach her, when I went to her house with my parents. We just ask her. She was always very nice.

We just had a really special bond - is good, "bond"? - and when I found out that she is being sick, and when I felt, like later on I found out it's not going to end up really well, I just felt like she was giving me so much of her experience, so much of her power, of her attitude. She learned me so many things that I just felt at the end of her life I have to be there. I just have to really support her.

Even I knew it's going to be really bad, I wasn't really handling the situation well. My parents just were telling me not to go, because they've seen how it's actually ruining me. But I just felt like I have to go and I have to support her.

I just felt that if I'm going to go through this process and I'm going to just help her and support her, it's going to give me a lot of strength. Then I'm going to appreciate a lot of things more.

So it was pretty much my decision. But I felt that I have to do it just for myself, just so I feel that I was there, that I was supporting her, as she was supporting me when I started, when we started working, when we started our cooperation.

Yeah, so I'm just really happy. I also think that she was also happy that I was there. That's why she's looking after me right now. That's actually why I have this many Grand Slams, because she's just from somewhere above looking after me. She wants me to win. She knows what it means to me, and I know what it would mean to her.

**Q. A few weeks ago in Madrid you were talking about trophies. You were talking about enjoying to bring them back to your small hometown, that they always give you memories, the best souvenir. As you look at the Coupe Suzanne-Lenglen, what goes through your mind? What are the memories? What are the feelings you feel right now?**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: I wish I have this one, the bigger one, and I can actually bring it home. I actually

get like the replique, so it's a little bit smaller. It's way smaller. I mean, this one is nicer, but I'm going to enjoy the other one as well.

Pretty much what comes to my mind, I can't actually wait to go back to my club and show it to my coach, my very first coach, as we talk in Madrid. I think he's just going to be really happy. I'm sure he never really expected that I'm going to be a Grand Slam champion in a singles.

I think we just all going to go there, we just going to cry, just going to be there and enjoy.

**Q. For those of us who knew Jana, she was always somebody incredibly down-to-earth, soft-spoken, had a great laugh and smile. What was the most special thing you found in her? And regarding the trophy, where will you keep it? Your place or give it to your parents to look after?**

BARBORA KREJCIKOVA: I don't know what I'm going to do with the trophy because I didn't expect that I'm going to actually hold the trophy. So I have to think about it. I mean, also the tournament is not over for me yet. I'm playing again tomorrow. I really have to get myself ready for tomorrow because I really want to do well with my partner.

About Jana, I mean, really special thing for me was when I actually came to her and approach her, I didn't really expect her reaction. I went there, I actually came from like an illness. I wasn't really playing tennis for like month because I was just sick. I just went there. She was just very nice, very warm, as you were saying.

She told me like, I have a court on Thursday in this club at this time. If you want to come, you can come, we can look at you, have a hit. We just going to see what's going to come.

I mean, I just told her like, I was sick for one month so I don't know if I can actually hold the racquet.

She was like, It doesn't matter. If you feel like, just show up, we going to see you hit. If you cannot hit, we can talk, it's nice. The club is good. You are just going to enjoy.

I went there. When I went there for the very first time I was nervous because she was such an amazing person, such a big tennis player, big athlete and everything. She was always just very nice, very warm. She wasn't acting like she won so many titles, that she's somebody special. She's always acting like a normal person.

This is something I really appreciate on her. There was something that was actually guiding me to be actually the same. Winning this Grand Slam titles in doubles, now in singles, but still be the same. She always told me like,

Doesn't matter how many titles you're going to win, you always have to come and say hello, please, and thank you. It's very important to behave very nice.

I take all of this and I really appreciate because that's what she was actually doing. She was a great athlete. She was still very humble. She's a big role model. I just want to be same as she was.

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