

# National Bank Open

Tuesday, August 9, 2022

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

**Leylah Fernandez**

**Bianca Fernandez**

Press Conference



L. FERNANDEZ, B. FERNANDEZ/K. Flipkens, S. Sorribes Tormo

6-4, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Can you start us off and tell us a bit about today's match?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: It was a fun match. I know that Bianca played an incredible match. She definitely carried the team today. She did what we practiced. And I also did what I had to do.

So I think that's what made it a lot more fun. That we were just able to enjoy our game. Even though that we were playing against tough players we got to just have fun on the court.

And I had the opportunity to play with my sister once again. And this time we came out with a win. So that definitely made it special.

Go ahead, Bianca (laughing).

BIANCA FERNANDEZ: All right. Well my checklist kind of, like you said everything on my list, but all right.

I think what was great about this match was definitely how we enjoyed each other's company. We didn't really care whether we won or not. It was just about playing and enjoying the game, the sport. And we did that very well. And fortunately the win fell in our lap.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

**Q. Bianca, this one must have some extra significance for you. Your first WTA-level win, if I'm not mistaken. How special is that for you and to be able to do it alongside your sister as well?**

BIANCA FERNANDEZ: It's extremely special. I've been working a lot on my game and I love having my sister

beside me because she knows how to calm me down, how to guide me.

She's been an inspiration to me. I've been watching her. And she's my shield at the same time (laughing). I knew I was going to get you to cry (laughing). So doing it along side with her, it's a dream come true.

**Q. How does it make you feel to hear those words from your sister there?**

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I want to cry. No, I think I'm just very, very happy that she thinks so highly of me. Like I'm just trying to be a good example for her.

And I think it's even more special for me that we were able to get our first doubles match win. I know we've had a couple of opportunities in the past and we fell short, but this time we were able to go all the way through.

And I think that's going to help, not only for my sister but also for me. That I know how hard we train, how both of us, we train on court.

And I think just having this opportunity and thanks to the organizers for giving us this opportunity to play in front of our home crowd. It made it even more special.

**Q. I would like to ask you something a little bit away from today's match. We got the news today that Serena is going to retire after the US Open. Like to ask you both, first of all, how you feel about the game losing the player some people call the greatest ever.**

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: It's, honestly, it's very sad news. She's an icon, she's a legend. The sport needs her.

She's done incredible things for not only tennis but also for women. She gave us a path to follow.

And I feel like a lot of us see her as a great role model. And that we know that she's done incredible things and we just want to try to reach that. She's a legend.

And then afterwards I know that she's making a decision for herself and we just got to trust that she's going to do the right things. I'm sure that hopefully maybe she can come



back on sport and hopefully help us help the younger generations.

I'm sure she's just going to be great, great role model, even away from tennis.

**Q. Have you actually played her before?**

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: No, I have not played her. Which I hope I can have the opportunity to play her. But I think we're just going to have to take it one match at a time.

Like I said, Serena, she's a legend and I know that everybody would want to have the opportunity to play against Serena Williams.

**Q. Bianca, same question. How do you feel about Serena putting down her racquet for the final time next month?**

BIANCA FERNANDEZ: I'm a little sad. Because when I was a kid she was the only one I ever really watched and enjoyed watching. She kind of inspired me to be a bit more fiery on court and accept that I have emotions.

But, you know what, she's a legend, she's done so much for the sport. She has inspired me. She has inspired so many girls, boys, adults, all sorts.

She has a family. She has stepped into a different part of life. And it's all her decision and I wish her luck in whatever she does.

**Q. You said she inspired players such as yourself. Did you pattern any part of your game after watching her as a young girl?**

BIANCA FERNANDEZ: I wish I could say yes but unfortunately I think our height difference is a little massive (laughing).

But her attitude and her devotion and her fight, I think I really, it just brought me and I said, Okay, I'll devote myself like she devotes to the sport, the fight, to the game, to the match, to the point. She just really, she puts herself at a hundred percent and does not give up.

**Q. If you could each talk about maybe what is the best quality that each other possesses, that your sister possesses as a doubles partner and just as a sister as well.**

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: So as a doubles partner I think Bianca, she's quick and unpredictable. And that's like one of the best qualities like I can give her.

Because even I don't know sometimes what she's going to do. So I just have to like be ready on my toes. So I have no idea what the opponents feel like.

Even in singles she's the exact same way. We train together a lot and she's very quick and very unpredictable.

And as a sister I think she's just very understanding and calm when she needs to be. Like especially for me, like she was able to calm me down in the most important points in the match today, especially in the first set. So that definitely helped me.

So I think just for her to notice the situation, notice that I was in trouble and know how to calm me down is, could be like one of her biggest qualities.

**Q. And Bianca?**

BIANCA FERNANDEZ: You have none. (Laughing) I'm kidding.

Well, her professionalism. Whether it's singles or doubles. It's just, we're both sisters, but we're both different.

And I have to learn from her that she's extremely professional and in a moment of pressure she will execute to a T. I know she will do everything that she's asked.

So if I ask like, Oh, I think you should go to the T. I knew she would execute right away. So it's just the fact that she's so professional in doing stuff. It's just, it gives me extreme confidence and it's great.

As a sister she's extremely happy all the time. So, like she said, I'm very calm and she kind of just lifts my spirits up because it's just like that (laughing).

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