

National Bank Open

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Leylah Fernandez

Press Conference



B. HADDAD MAIA/L. Fernandez

7-6, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions in English. Do you want to just walk us through the match, Leylah?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: Yeah, sure. Well, first of all, congratulations to Beatriz. She played an incredible match.

For me I didn't play my highest level. But I'm still trying to find my match form, not only physically but also mentally.

So I think there's some positives. But I just know that we're going to get back to work and get ready for the next tournament.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Obviously you, in the time leading up to this, you're recovering from injury. Did that injury or that recovery time affect your play at all through out the week?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I would say yes because I didn't get any matches. That's the biggest difference.

While other players are playing matches I haven't been. Nor practicing at the level that I want nor playing any matches. So I think that that set me back a little bit.

But now I know what I need to do. Now I know what we're going to train to get back at the highest level as quickly as possible. So I guess tomorrow we're just going to get back to training.

Q. You just said that you're getting back to training. But what does that specifically look like in terms of getting back more into tournament shape?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: We're going to talk with my team. I think that question will be answered more specifically by my coach, dad. He knows exactly what we're looking for. I have an idea but I can't say what exactly.

Q. You had a bit of tape on your left knee today. Just wondering if that was an issue at all.

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: Oh, no, that was just a scrape. I fell in my first round and the wound opened up. And we didn't want it to be infected, so we had that taped.

Q. In terms of your expectations coming in, obviously it was to just get some match practice going, take those steps towards being where you want to be. Probably not as many matches as you wanted, but how are you feeling about what you got from this week?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: It's a little hard today because we just finished with two losses. But no, I think I'm just happy that I finally was back in competition and that we not only tested out the foot but also the body.

And the body feels great. Of course not at the level that we want it to be, but at least we know what we need to work on. So that's the main thing.

And then hopefully we can get ready for the next week, next tournament.

Q. I was curious, on Saturday you were speaking about how excited you were to be playing in Toronto, hometown fans, well home nation fans. How were the fans? How was it playing once again in Canada?

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: It felt great. It felt like Billie Jean King Cup all over again. I remember playing it earlier this year in Vancouver and I was just loving the atmosphere. And all my matches there were a lot of people watching us.

And I think that just brought back so many good memories. I'm just happy that I had that opportunity once again.

Q. Looking specifically at the doubles matches, what do you cherish most about those two matches you got to play with Bianca and maybe even the last couple months spending all that time with her that you maybe didn't anticipate.

LEYLAH FERNANDEZ: I think it's more seeing how she



progressed over the years. I was just so happy to be on court with her.

And this time on the same side of the net, not face-to-face playing against each other or practicing against each other. But as in like I'm able to see how much difficulty she gives our opponents.

And then also I was just able to see how much she matured. We've played a couple of times. I've seen how much she's struggled and how much she's learned and how much she got better over the course of the years.

And I'm just proud that she never gave up, even when things got difficult. I think those are like those moments where I can say that I'm just happy to be beside her and just support her the best way I can.

Not necessarily giving her advice but just being there and knowing that if she needs someone to talk their ears off, I'm here.

If I can give her that confidence, I think we can become like better doubles players in the future. I just know our bond can be stronger.

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