

National Bank Open

Saturday, August 13, 2022

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Beatriz Haddad Maia

Press Conference



B. HADDAD MAIA/K. Pliskova

6-4, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Biggest win of your career. Can you talk us through that a bit?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Well, I feel happy. It's a special moment. I think I had a very tough draw. I had to push myself. I played a lot of tough moments.

I think I support moments that I was especially down in the match that I was not playing well, and I was mentally strong. So I think that's why I'm having the chance to play tomorrow against Simona in the final.

Q. You're the first Brazilian to reach a final in Canada in 25 years. Gustavo Kuerten did it in 1997. I guess my question is, what does it mean to you to make Brazilian tennis history here?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Well, for me, it's very special. We have Maria Esther Bueno, Guga. I don't compare myself with them. For me they are phenomenals.

It's very important and it's a pleasure for me to be not even only Brazilian, but woman from South America. We have a lot of mens, Argentinian and another like Brazilians people playing big tournaments also.

But it's very special to represent the woman's power in this stage of tournament. And, yeah, I'm very proud of myself and my team.

Q. You did a great job of mixing up your velocities on your service game. I know you probably can't tell us too much about your preparation for tomorrow, but I'm wondering whether that's going to be a consideration playing Simona tomorrow.

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Yeah, Simona, it's a very competitive player. For me, she one of the most competitive players in the tour. We played each other now in Birmingham, and I won this match, but I lost in the

Australian Open. I lost in 2017 also.

And she's like a champion. She's a person who works very hard. I know it will be a very tough battle. But, yeah, I'm going to enjoy. I'm going to leave everything on the court.

I will try to play aggressive. I learned a lot today because in the moments that I wasn't too aggressive, she was playing better than me. The match was 5-1 to me, and I want to improve that for tomorrow. So, yeah, I'm going to try to enjoy and play point by point.

Q. Based off of your play this week, you're going to crack the top 20 in the world rankings next week. What does that mean to you, especially given how far you've come in the past 12 months?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Yeah, it's a special moment again. I think I'm having a lot of nice things coming through in the last few weeks in my career. Again, I think the results comes because of the hard work.

The only thing I change in the last 12 years or 12 months was to focus more in the process and not about results. But for sure we set goals, and my next goal was to be in the top 20. So I'm very happy because we never know in tennis when it's going to happen.

But I always try to be positive and push myself 110 percent. I'm happy that I could make it during this week in Canada.

Q. You were coming off two grass court titles. Lower tier. So what were your honest expectations coming to this tournament, and then especially when you saw that you had drawn Iga for her first match? So what were you really expecting of yourself?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Yeah, yeah, my expectation in Toronto I think was the same expectation in the tournaments on grass. I think the moments that I played my best tennis was when I didn't have a lot of expectation. I think sometimes we think about when we create things that doesn't exist in our mind.

So my expectation was just to come here and to work hard, because last week I didn't work well. My opponents, she



played better than me. But I had a lot of opportunities. This week I decide to make it different. I think that's why I could like improve my game. I could play point by point.

I think the toughest moment was to play the third set in the first round. In the first round nobody wants to go home. And, yeah, I was fighting. I was giving me chances. I was trying to, yeah, be aggressive.

Each round I was getting confident. I was believing more and more on me. And, yeah, that's why I think I'm here in the final.

Q. What is the difference playing and winning with Iga Swiatek and Pliskova?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: The difference between Iga and Pliskova?

Q. Playing with Iga Swiatek and Pliskova.

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Both are very tough players because they are very aggressive. So even sometimes when you play your best tennis, you can lose the point. So sometimes the match is not a hundred percent on your control. When they are serving well and hitting hard, it's tough to make the first shots and be aggressive on their shot.

But, yeah, I think Pliskova has a very good serve when she goes for it. It's very tough to return. And Iga, mentally she's for me in another level. That's why she has a lot of results. She's very competitive. She play every single point. And, yeah, I think the difference is that, that one.

Q. Polish people wish you winning tomorrow in the final.

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Thank you (laughing.)

Q. Do you feel like you're on this incredible roll? Because I think looking from the outside it's upset, upset, upset, upset. How does that feel to you?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: (Laughing) No, I'm happy. I'm very happy.

Yeah, it's just because during the tournament, I try to go like step by step, because I know I need to enjoy today because I won a match. But in two hours I'm going to think about the match, like, tomorrow's match.

And in tennis, it's crazy that even when you have nice moments, you need to prepare yourself for the next day. It is like being like 0-0. We never have moments like very

happy and very sad. So I try to balance in my mind.

But no, for sure inside me I'm very happy with the moment.

Q. You talk a lot about your team. I noticed in the second set tiebreaker every time you won you would fist pump to your team. How important is your team, not only just in the match but also away from the court as well?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Yeah, well, first of all, I'm very, like I'm a very emotional person. I like to get the energy. I look a lot to them. Sometimes too much. But, yeah, they are very important.

Normally I don't need to look every single point because we talk before the match. So I just try to get the energy. We know what we work for. We know what is going on. But they are very important to, well, first of all to build my mind, to prepare my body, to prepare my game, the strategy that we want to to make it.

During the match we just try to be positive, get the energy, even when we are not playing very well. Today wasn't my best tennis, but they were there with me. And they make me feel stronger and believe. Doesn't matter if you don't play well, you can find a way to get this one. And that's why I think I'm getting stronger every match.

Q. You mentioned that you're an emotional player. Earlier today Simona was telling us that she's an emotional person, player, and that she's found her fire again. How do you harness those emotions in the middle of the match? How do you control them and make them work to your advantage?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Well, you guys can see sometimes I scream a lot. I don't know how to say this with my hand (indicating.) And, yeah, I just try to breathe a little bit more. I try to calm down and think about the what I need to do and not what I'm living.

I try to play like every point and think about the next shot. Don't think about, Oh, I'm here playing against No. 1 in the world in a big stage in a 1000 WTA, because otherwise I wouldn't be able to, like, play.

So, yeah, I just try to do things, not only inside of the court, but also outside like trying to play guitar or reading more or listening to music or just trying to be with myself alone to, yeah, improve that, because I want to improve this part of me.

Q. I got a couple messages from fans watching and loving one of your celebrations. I don't even know if



you knew you were doing it, but you were sticking your tongue out and kind of smiling and having some fun.

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: (Indicating.)

Q. That's the one. And I'm wondering if you have a name for it, if it's something maybe we're going to see again or?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: I didn't know that I did it (laughing.) Like, I was emotional moment. Sometimes we just react. Yeah, yesterday when I saw the match point also I served ace, yeah, it was like wide or T and when I decide, like, I went for it and then it was ace and I was laughing with myself. But it was like a celebration.

And today I think I was, like, doing something like that. And for sure I didn't think about it and I don't know. I watch the film to see what I did.

Q. It's kind of Michael Jordan-esque and I think people were really enjoying it.

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Oh. Thank you. Thanks.

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