

# National Bank Open

Monday, August 12, 2024

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Jessica Pegula

### Press Conference



J. PEGULA/A. Anisimova

6-3, 2-6, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, Jessica. You defended your title, just sum up your emotions for you right now.

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, awesome, so excited to be here with the trophy again. I really wanted this one. I know everyone's like talking about my record and all this stuff, but it's nice to, yeah, to be able to get through the week and to back it up, so just super excited, I mean, an honor, really.

THE MODERATOR: First question?

**Q. Can you talk about the support you get here, what is it about playing in Canada for you that seems to fit?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I don't know. I've always just played well here, and I think my results kind of show that. Especially Toronto, it's nice, it's so close to Buffalo, I had a lot of friends, family, and my grandparents, my husband was able to come today, that's cool, I don't really get that at a lot of tournaments.

Then to be able to win the tournament as well, and to be able to share that moment with them is really special.

I don't know what it is about Canada, but, yeah, I just, I seem to do well, so I'll just, yeah, I'll take it (laughing).

**Q. Hard enough to win a WTA 1000 event, let alone defend one, what are some of the added pressures, stresses, challenges of doing it back-to-back?**

JESSICA PEGULA: You know, this week it didn't feel that stressful. Because I came straight from Paris, maybe in a way that kind of helped because I didn't have much time to think about defending, it was more just getting used to the hard court, getting used to the conditions, the balls, the movement is different.

At the same time, I think I always feel comfortable on hard courts anyway, so I knew I would find my footing and kind of find my way throughout the tournament if I could get my way through the first few rounds. I think I was able to do that really well, and play some of my best tennis kind of later in the semis and the finals, for sure. Yeah, maybe in a way that kind of helped because there wasn't too much hype, I wasn't really thinking about it that much, it was more just I was focusing on other things with such a short turnaround from Paris.

**Q. Curious about your read on the match, because it really felt like a tale of two different matches. You only lost one point on your serve in the first set, you had those chances to break to go up an early break in the second, and then she came back, and you responded pretty well as well. Curious to know your impressions of the match and where you thought the momentum really shifted for you.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I thought I came out playing really well, as good as I could, serving as well as I possibly can, especially it was still a little breezy out there.

Then that second, yeah, I had 40-Love, 1-0, 40-Love to break, and I lost that game, and the whole momentum just shifted. I could feel it, and I knew it, and it's one of those things where I knew if I won that game, like I would have most of the momentum, and it was going to be hard, if I could just hold there and go up 3-0, that it was going to be tough for her to kind of come roaring back.

At the same time, like, when you lose it, you kind of have to reset, and it was a pivotal moment, but I think at the end of the day I was able to reset in the third, which I knew I had to.

Starting the third I just tried to pick up my energy a lot. I felt like I hit a little bit of a lull, it's hard when you start off the first set, I felt like I was playing so well, serving so well, that I didn't really have to do too much.

And then, all of a sudden, the second set, maybe I missed a few shots, and things get a little dicey, and I don't win that game there, that I kind of lost a little bit of energy, and I kind of didn't really, I wasn't really doing much, she started playing better as well and serving better.



The third, I was just, like, I just need to pick up my energy here, and I need to come and start off the third and get on her really quickly. Especially someone that can have such big ball-striking ability and hit winners and kind of boss you around the court, you know, you want a good lead from someone like that in the third.

**Q. It was sweet hearing you and Amanda both talk after the match. I'm wondering what was going through your mind as you heard her talk and open up a bit.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I think she's been a little, she's pretty shy, she doesn't, she's not super outgoing, at least I don't know her super well, but like around other players she's not the most outgoing, she kind of keeps to herself.

It was nice to see her kind of open up a little bit. I feel like that's the most I've heard her talk in awhile, so it was really nice to see, and that she's able to share open. Honestly, it's not always easy to do that, especially after a loss and especially in front of stadium full of people, and I think that's probably why she was a little emotional, but she was able to power through that and say some really nice stuff.

Yeah, it's just nice to see. She's so young, and it just shows you that everyone's career isn't the same path, and I think as the media we get caught up in these story lines of phenoms, and everyone playing so well when they're younger, and sometimes it just doesn't always go that way. Even though she was that, her story kind of changed as she got older. It doesn't mean it's a bad, failure of a story, it just means it's different, so it's nice to see that she's able to come back on her terms, and then also play some really great tennis, and see that it was worth it, and that it paid off for her. I think that's a really nice story that people want to see.

**Q. Curious if you had a specific message for Amanda when you guys met at the net.**

JESSICA PEGULA: I just told her, Great week, and she said, Congrats, great match. Yeah, it wasn't anything more than that. We've spoken a little bit here and there, and I think what she said and what I said on the court kind of speaks for itself.

Yeah, I wasn't expecting a ton of words from her. Like I said, she's pretty shy and keeps to herself. That's fine, like I'm not, it's how she is, but, yeah, just told her, Great week. I knew she was going to be upset, I don't need to say anything else. I was happy I won, and I'm sure she wanted a different result, but, yeah, I feel like I just, when we did our speeches we kind of said what we needed to say, and I

have a lot of respect for her game.

**Q. I want to ask you about that nice trophy sitting next to you, just how it compares in terms of its look compared to the other ones you might have at home, and where do your trophies go, do you have a special spot where you keep them?**

JESSICA PEGULA: It looks the same, I have three of 'em now. Amanda was like, How do you hold it? And she was like holding it, and I was like, No, it's like this. I was like, I know, I have a couple of 'em (laughing.)

Yeah, no, it's a cool trophy, it's one of the nicer ones, it's one of my favorite ones. I have a little office room with some built-in book shelves that I keep all my trophies, so I can add this one, yeah, to the collection, and it will be pretty cool. It's a good-looking trophy.

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