

Omnium Banque Nationale

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Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Rebecca Marino

Press Conference



R. MARINO/M. Keys

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THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Why don't you just walk us through the match, how you felt out there on court.

REBECCA MARINO: Yeah, well, where do I start? Obviously I'm really excited to come away with the win there. Keys is a really strong player with a big serve, a big forehand. I knew it would be a really tough match going in there.

But I know I also have an equally big serve and big forehand, so I just had to give it my best shot. Got a couple breaks of serve, and that was pretty much it.

Really happy I capitalized on the opportunity of winning that match, and excited for the next one.

Q. You were one of the first players who talked openly about depression, about anxiety. You had to pause your career for a couple years because of that. How important is it for you to see this subject on evidence again after everything that happened with Naomi, with Simone Biles? How important is it for you to see this subject again?

REBECCA MARINO: Yeah, well, I mean, I think it's evident in the way I'm playing right now, that I'm even back in the game. I think it was the right decision at the time for me to step away from the game. I know some people didn't understand it at the time, but I'm really proud of the decisions I made because it made me feel like a completely whole individual, and it made me rediscover my love and passion for the sport. I think it shows when I play. I try to show that at least (smiling).

I think it also shows that I'm in a completely different head space now because I did take that time to sort of make sure that I was taking care of myself, staying healthy mentally, physically, then come back into the game when I was ready.

Yeah, I'm really proud of that decision that I made and I'm proud of how far I've come to where I am right now.

Q. It was a good display of power, but also a lot of touch on your part. Was it part of the game plan to attack her and catch her flat-footed?

REBECCA MARINO: Well, I knew it's pretty much a game -- at least the game between the both of us would be who could dictate the point first since we're both very big power hitters. I knew I would have to take the first ball I could and try to dictate the point right off the bat.

So, yeah, I suppose that was kind of the tactic going in, but also not going for crazy winners and having my patience. Yeah, I guess that was the right game plan going in.

Q. How big was it for your momentum to get that first break in the first set?

REBECCA MARINO: Yeah, of course that was huge. To know that I could break her serve gave me a lot of confidence. Of course, it allowed me to feel that I could do it a second or a third time through that second set.

Yeah, I think that was a really critical moment. I'm glad I was able to do it. It would be a different story right now. Yeah, that made all the difference, those breaks of serves.

Q. All the tennis that I've seen you play this year, you're playing at a much higher level than your ranking. Obviously your ranking prevents you from getting into the bigger tournaments and moving up. What do you think has to happen for you to be able to get on enough of a run to play the biggest events on a more regular basis?

REBECCA MARINO: Well, of course that's the goal. I want to play those big events. I do feel like I'm a little under-ranked right now, which is good and not great at the same time.

It's using tournaments like this where I do get a wild card, capitalizing on the opportunity as much as I can to earn those ranking points and get my ranking back up. That's what I tried to do in Australia, getting back in the qualifying,



winning that first round.

There's ups and downs through the years. I think I have to sort of seize the opportunities when I have them and just keep going for it as hard as I can.

It's a little different right now with the pandemic and everyone's rankings are kind of all over the place. I just have to kind of keep my head down and just focus on my game and know that the results will follow, as well.

Q. Has it been challenging to find places to play, try to plan a schedule, make decisions about where to go because of where you stand and the scattered nature of what's available out there to you?

REBECCA MARINO: Yeah, of course. Like you said, it's a matter of where my ranking is. Sometimes a matter of where the tournaments are in the world.

For quite a long time, too, this year as a Canadian, I was dictated by knowing how long I should travel. I was traveling for two months at a time, then I'd return home. I would do the full quarantine for two weeks, get back in my training, and head out for another two months.

Luckily we have the exemption for fully vaccinated Canadians now, so I can probably play around with my schedule a little bit more. That's what I've been doing, big blocks through the year and really long trips I wouldn't normally do. I'm hoping to sort of adjust my schedule.

Q. What will you remember most about tonight's experience?

REBECCA MARINO: Oh, gosh. Well, I think I will remember the crowd the most from the experience tonight. It was just an electric experience. I could feel the energy from the crowd the moment I stepped out on the court.

To have some familiar faces in my box, as well, it was just so great to have that comfort, knowing that so many people were behind me. I think that's what I'm going to take away, is just the energy from the crowd, that feeling of the match, yeah.

Q. How would you describe what a win like this means to you?

REBECCA MARINO: Gosh, I don't even know where to begin. This win means a lot. It's been a long journey back from not only coming out of retirement but also coming back from a big injury last year in 2019. I knew this would be a really good chance to sneak up on some players and get some wins if I could just play the game that I want to

play.

Yeah, so it means a lot that I have this opportunity, that I was able to win.

Q. I don't want you to look too far ahead, just enjoy this victory, but looking at your second-round opponent, Paula Badosa of Spain, quarterfinal at the French Open. What do you think about her game and what are you anticipating in that match?

REBECCA MARINO: I mean, it's great you're telling me. I didn't know who I was playing in the next round. You're catching me off guard here with a game plan because I'm just finding this out (smiling).

Yeah, I think I have to go in with the same mentality and just focus on my game since I have a game style that's more -- I play better when I dictate with the serve, the forehand, going after my shots, having the mindset that I belong here.

Then in terms of her game style, I have to do a little bit more research on that. I know she's coming in with a lot of confidence. She's had a good year. But I just have to do my best and know that I belong on the court there and do my best to win.

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...quand tout est dit, nous avons terminé.