

# Omnium Banque Nationale

Friday, 13 August 2021

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

## Jessica Pegula

Press Conference



J. PEGULA/O. Jabeur

1-6, 7-6, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Could you walk us through the match, how you performed today.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I mean, that was a crazy match. It's a lot of back and forth, a lot of I thought just weird points. It was a little windy at the beginning.

I don't think I started off very well. I think she was playing very good. I looked at the clock and I saw that I think the first set was 20 minutes. My first set against Pavlyuchenkova the other night was like 23 minutes. I looked at my coach, I don't think I could play a worse match than I did the other night but I just did.

I knew if I could hold onto my serve, I'd get me chances. Obviously she made some errors there at the end. I got the momentum and started playing better. Just kind of ran away with that third.

Again, interesting match. I can say I've been on the other side of that, as well. I get it. It's sucks for her, but I'm happy I hung in there.

**Q. I come prepared with stats in terms of your winning four three-setters in a row.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Never done that before.

**Q. You won three in a row in the quallies in 's-Hertogenbosch, all 6-4 in the third. You lost first round in the main draw.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Okay.

**Q. And the closest one, believe it or not, was also in Canada. You won two three-setters in the quallies.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Wait, in Québec, right?

**Q. Yes.**

JESSICA PEGULA: I played Ons.

**Q. Not, not in that one. (Indiscernible) and Broady. You beat Nicole Gibbs in the first round. But then you lost to Ostapenko. That's pretty close. The question is, can you give us an idea of what kind of work you're doing that nobody sees that allows you to win four three-setters in a row in the conditions that have been going on this week, the late nights?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Honestly I haven't really done anything that different. I've done like a little extra stuff in the gym just to help with my back and my hips and stuff like that.

Honestly it's just kind of will. When there's a will, there's a way. Honestly, some of these sets have really been fast. I'm not out there as long as people think. I lost a couple 20-minute sets. That was a three-set match, but the first set was 20 minutes. It hasn't been as grueling.

Yeah, it's humid. Tokyo was like absolutely awful, so nothing can get worse than that. Honestly, I don't really feel that bad. I think actually the humidity there playing probably helped me prep and being in south Florida helped me prep for the humidity here.

Other than that I haven't really done much different. It's really just mental.

**Q. Do you think the way that you're able to save energy, when you are demonstrative on the court, it's usually for something positive you've done, you rarely waste energy on negativity, do you think in the long term you do save a little bit of energy overall by pushing it all into your tennis as opposed to the extraneous stuff?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, when I was younger and I had a lot of trouble dealing with how I was on court, I was either negative or mopey or too hyped up, I didn't really know how to act. It sounds kind of weird, but I didn't really have a personality out there.

It's kind of funny how the last few years I haven't really



been trying, but people are like, You're always so calm and collected, look so confident and so calm. It's so funny because if you asked me when I was 15, 16, you've followed me, I would have people telling me my attitude is terrible. Not even that I was like yelling or screaming, but just that I looked like I didn't want to be there, I was moping.

It's interesting how that's kind of become my identity on the court. It's amazing. It just goes to show that I put in the work mentally and physically to kind of get that type of personality and identity out there.

For me, when I was younger, people would want me to fist pump and yell and show positive energy. For the longest time I was trying to do it, but it took a lot out of me. I didn't really like that. I always thought it kind of drained me emotionally. For me, that's what works for me. I know other people are different. Some people like to show. I try not to do too much. I do sometimes talk to myself, I say something to my coach, like this is the worst set of tennis I've ever seen. Just little things.

I really have tried to work on just if it's negative, okay, it's negative. You touch on it and you just let it go. I think it's okay to be somewhat emotional out there. It shows that you care. I think I've just gotten better at just letting it go and on to the next point.

**Q. Can you talk about the second set in particular. Turning it around, it seemed like she had that momentum going, but you slowly were able to pull it back. Did you get a sense maybe she started getting less disciplined with her shots, footwork?**

JESSICA PEGULA: I mean, at first I thought I made her play a lot more. I dug my heels in, I'm not going to give away these easy errors, I'm going to kind of will myself to start playing better. That doesn't always work, but it seemed to work just in time tonight.

Obviously, too, I personally don't think I was putting many balls in the court. She was getting so many unforced errors from me. All of a sudden now I'm making balls. Yeah, there's pressure to close it out. I experienced the same thing last night. At 3 a.m. I was up 5-3, 40-Love. It's not that easy. When the momentum changes, you hit a double-fault, one bad shot, they hit a winner, next thing you know the pressure is right back on.

I think once I broke I started realizing, All right, just hold here, and I think she's going to kind of start making some more errors. Yeah, they started to come. Into that third set I could feel like if I could just jump on her quick, kind of keep the same type of mentality that she might give me

more errors. I just wanted to jump out ahead in that third set as much as I could.

**Q. This season you've taken some tough three-set losses. With the string you've been able to build up, come back from a set down in your last three, you talk about the pressure of knowing what it's like to be up in the scoreline, but also the flip side of that. How much do you take out of that experience of those tough losses?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I mean, a lot. This whole year I feel like a lot of -- there's been very few matches where people have kind of even beaten me in straights or where I was kind of blown off the court.

My coach has kind of been telling me, These girls are seeing this, they are seeing that it takes a lot to beat you, that you are not going to roll over. It may not be going your way right now, but it will. Of course I was like, Yeah, whatever. You don't understand. When is it going to start changing?

I'm not saying they weren't good players. I lost to some really good hot players at the time, too, streak players. I don't know, it just turned around this week. I mean, I think it's helped maybe being on hard court a little bit. I think I'm better on hard court than maybe the clay or the grass right now. It's where my confidence seems to be.

But, yeah, I've been on that flip side. I played Elise Mertens, up in the same situation, quarterfinals, up a set and 5-2, had multiple match points, and I lost 6-0 in the third. I literally know exactly how she feels right now. It freaking sucks. Sometimes your emotions get the best of you and you're like I can't deal with this right now. I think that's okay sometimes.

I'm just glad that I've been able to kind of flip that and use that as a learning experience to be here now and be on the other side of that.

**Q. Does it feel like you're in the biggest semifinal of your career, like a big result for you, or you're in tournament mode?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Honestly, it doesn't really feel that big. I don't know if that's good or bad. Maybe good. I think I'm just getting more comfortable at this level. Lost a couple quarterfinals, close matches in these 1000s. I'm just happy to be through tonight.

It doesn't really feel like a big, huge -- I mean, it's a big win, just to me because of the situation and coming out of it. But not so much whether it's a semi or going into a final.

I think I feel comfortable now. But we'll see. Who knows about tomorrow.

**Q. Looking ahead to Giorgi. Different type of player. Offensive like Ons but in a different way. Talk about the challenge of playing her when she's on a hot streak.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, she's always tough. She just goes for it, doesn't really back down. I don't mind playing someone like that. I think my game can match up well against her, but I think I'm going to have to start coming out a little quicker in these matches. I keep telling myself that every match. Doesn't really seem to be happening. I'll just tell myself again until it works. Especially against someone like her where it can start going really quickly, I think I have to come out good and serving well. I think I always return well.

Serve is definitely big. Again, I've played her a few times. I feel comfortable about the matchup.

**Q. When you mentioned people were telling you when you were a junior to fist pump, you're talking about coaches, right?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, coaches or my parents or people, coaches, anybody type of coach that would watch me play, talk to me or something like that, yes.

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