

# Omnium Banque Nationale

Monday, 7 August 2023

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

## Jessica Pegula

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Jessica, welcome back to Montreal. If you could just give us your thoughts about playing here this year.

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I'm definitely very excited. Last time I was here since we alternate with Toronto, I was -- it was COVID I think, so I didn't really feel like I got to experience the full tournament here, so it's kind of nice.

Yeah, I never really played here much to be honest beside that one year. I think that was the only year. So I feel like I'm kind of playing it for the first time in a cool way.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Correct me if I'm wrong, but this would be your last event with Coco as a pair; right?**

JESSICA PEGULA: What do you mean?

**Q. This tournament here, that's your last tournament with her as a team, as a doubles --**

JESSICA PEGULA: No, no, we're playing with each other throughout. Yeah, for the rest of the year, I think. It's okay.

Someone sent me that headline, and I was, like, that's weird. I don't know where on earth that came from. Just because we literally didn't play one week together, everybody was, like, You're not playing?

I was, like, Relax.

Everyone gives us crap for playing too much, and then we didn't play D.C., and we were getting so many questions.

No, we're still playing, yeah. We're playing US Open, here, Cincinnati I think as long as everything is going fine and, yeah, healthy.

**Q. Regarding this, I was just curious to know how both of you sort of handle the workload that you have because there's I don't think too many players -- it's not that common to see players who are ranked as high as both of you are playing both singles and**

**doubles.**

JESSICA PEGULA: One thing is I think she's young. She's like an Energizer Bunny. She's, like, yeah, I'll play whenever. One every day, it doesn't matter. Three time a day, I don't care.

No, I think, yeah, you don't usually see a lot of players playing, but for us I think we enjoy it, and we use it as a chance to get better in singles as well.

We already have had a great year, so I think that was kind of our decision not to play D.C. even though it would have been fun to play in the U.S. in Washington.

Going into the next two weeks, two 1000s, we kind of would rather prioritize that just as far as our ranking and the race to the finals. I think we were kind of we don't really have to play this week.

If there are weeks like that, I think we'll always think about not playing unless we really, really want to or need extra matches. But, yeah, we'll just kind of balance it out.

We enjoy playing. Like I said, using it kind of to get better as well for singles.

**Q. With that said, how do you stay consistent and I guess focus throughout the whole tournament?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Playing both you mean? Yeah, it's difficult, but at the same time I think we're similar in the way where we kind of -- she doesn't like to sit and wait around; I don't really like to sit and wait around.

To us it's kind of fun that we get to go out and even if we lose singles or whatever happens, go out and it's another chance to compete. It's another chance where we want to win.

Once you get out there and you're in the moment and you want to win the match, it all kind of feels the same. So I think for us it's more like extra motivation, and I think it keeps us in that competitive mindset of, okay, we're still in these pressure moments even if it's doubles, and we still want to win the match, and we still want to get better.

**ASAP** sports ...quand tout est dit, nous avons terminé.

I know she's told me she really wants to win a medal next year, and she really wants a slam, so that's kind of what we're working towards. I think you have to play other events if those are your goals.

**Q. Coco and Maria in Washington D.C. were kind of talking about how they needed that week given what had happened at Wimbledon with the first round exits and stuff. I'm just curious from your perspective as a player, how important is it for getting runs to wipe away a bad memory or result, or is that done on the training court? For you how does it work?**

JESSICA PEGULA: No, I definitely understand what they mean. It's really tough when you have an early exit and then you're not really playing for singles for a few weeks. Then there's another few weeks off. Then you have to go, and you're playing your first match.

In tennis time that feels like an eternity. It feels like a year has gone on between when you lost and when your next match is.

Also, I think your anxiety kind of builds up that you want to put to rest, okay, what happened is in the past, and you're on to a winning stage now, but that's just tennis.

I think I'm pretty similar. Even me, I did well at Wimbledon, and I had two weeks going into my first round, and I had a bye. I was, like, ah, I don't like this feeling. It's weird. I didn't play until Thursday.

It kind of is like when anxiety builds because the time is just going on and you're just waiting to play that next match, and you're just waiting. That can kind of get stressful.

I think both of them had an amazing week, and they played some great tennis. Yeah, I'm sure it's nice to just wipe the slate clean. That's the good thing about tennis too is that all you need is one good week, and you forget about everything that happened in the past.

**Q. Kind of on that topic of playing each week and getting that chance in tennis and you mentioned the Olympics, obviously next year. Obviously we're in the World Cup cycle right now with the women. I'm curious what your perspective is about because you did the Olympics, obviously, before.**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah.

**Q. Having four years to wait to play a big event that is career-defining, whereas you guys have four shots of it kind of in a single season, how do you get your head**

**around that? How different is it?**

JESSICA PEGULA: I don't understand how the athletes that do -- where the Olympics is -- I'm sure they have a world championship or something, but the Olympics is the greatest, the biggest achievement you can achieve in whatever it is you're doing, gymnastics, track and field, whatever it is.

The anxiety of building up for four years, I don't know how they do that. That has got to be crazy. And the ability to perform under pressure for that week or whatever it is for your event, I can't relate because I don't understand. That's like playing a slam every four years. People would be freaking out. Yeah, that's crazy.

Tennis, it's much different and still hard in the aspect of yet you always have another chance, you have four chances a year to win a slam. But then at the same time it's exhausting because next thing you know you're already up on the next slam, and you're like, here we go again, I've got to do this in two weeks.

It can get mentally draining almost in the opposite sense of the Olympics. But, yeah, I think they're just very different. I think maybe that's why it's kind of nice for tennis players that we have the slams and we have the Olympics; right?

It's like the Olympics doesn't seem as -- not that it's not a big deal, but it doesn't seem as big of a deal because you're, like, okay, I've played the four slams, which are really big. Now I have a chance to win something really cool, but it's more of like I think too a fun goal to work towards, just to even qualify. Especially being an American, there are so many good players, so...

**Q. Are the Sabres going to make the playoffs?**

JESSICA PEGULA: I hope so. Please, I hope so. I thought we were going to make it last year. We were doing okay, and then we lost ten games in a row. I was, like, well, there it goes.

No, I think we had a good young team last year. They were really -- they've been very fun to watch I would say the last few years. A very young team. I hope, yeah, next year we can bring it all together. It would be exciting.

**Q. Are the Bills going to win the Super Bowl?**

JESSICA PEGULA: I hope the Sabres win the Stanley Cup and the Bills win a Super Bowl and I win a slam. Everybody always asks me those questions. Yes, all three. Let's do it (laughing).

**Q. What are the most common emotions that you're dealing with during your matches?**

JESSICA PEGULA: That's a tough question. There's a lot of emotions. A lot of times it depends on the day.

Sometimes there's days where you're just very easily triggered and frustrated. So some days it's, okay, trying to find the positive, trying to keep going, not get too down on yourself.

Some days you're kind of low on energy, and maybe you need to fire yourself up more. Then there are some days, at least for me, where I feel like I'm too -- like I feel too good, which is weird to say, but I almost feel so good that I have to rein myself in a little bit. It's weird to say, but yeah, there's definitely a variety of different emotions.

I would say in tennis the best thing to do probably for everyone that goes through the same thing is just kind of not getting frustrated, not letting too many points bother you, playing it point-by-point and moving on to the next point and just trying not to -- yeah, not get stuck on a bad point or a bad game because that in tennis I think is just the easiest thing you can do, and it can kind of creep into your mind and affect the rest of the match.

So for me that's always something, like playing every single point as it is, whether you are winning or losing, because you never know what can happen. I would just say managing that and trying to stay present as much as you can point by point.

**Q. The weather outlook is not too good for the week. I just wanted to know how you prepare for that kind of week knowing that the schedule might be impacted, you might have to play two games a day, something like that?**

JESSICA PEGULA: We're used to it. Everyone asks. We're kind of used to it.

I don't really know if there's a secret thing we do or ritual. It's just -- you just kind of have to adapt with how you're feeling and the weather.

Everyone is doing the same thing, so I think you don't get too stressed out about it because everyone is kind of in the same boat. You know, they're all dealing with the same issues.

So, yeah, it's a lot of just trying to practice when you can and seeing what the schedule comes out to be and then going from there. It can change quite often, and it's already -- I think there's already a delay today, so I'm sure

-- hopefully it doesn't, but I'm sure it could affect tomorrow and the next couple of days. So it will be interesting, but nothing we're not used to.

**Q. Do you have access to indoor practice?**

JESSICA PEGULA: I don't know. Do we have? I don't think so. Unless you found an indoor club maybe somewhere.

There are some places, I think. Actually maybe Toronto I think had an indoor club that some girls would use. There might be one here. I haven't checked, but...

**Q. There's a couple here.**

JESSICA PEGULA: If it gets really bad, they might try and do something like that just to get girls to practice. Yeah, that's about it.

**Q. You won against Elina in Washington. I'm just wondering, are you impressed about her comeback the way she plays?**

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, definitely. I think everyone -- not that we didn't expect this, but obviously she came back very quickly, and then obviously she won Strasbourg, had great results at the French and Wimbledon. It was kind of very quick. We were, like, okay, she's back. She's really back.

No, I think I have a lot of respect for her. Like I said, she's going through a lot with her country and then let alone having a baby and coming back as well as she did. I feel like she's come back with, I don't know, more energy. She's competing really well.

Every match that I've watched she's competing so well. It's cool to see her come back with that fire that I feel like maybe at the end before she had her baby I feel like she was struggling a little bit, and to see it kind of flip through having a baby and what's going on and changing her perspective on things, I think is really cool.

It's nice to have her back. She's obviously a really successful, great player. Yeah, she's shaking things up a bit I guess, but in a good way. It's been nice to see.

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