

# Omnium Banque Nationale

Tuesday, 8 August 2023

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

## Kimberly Birrell

Press Conference



C. WOZNIACKI/K. Birrell

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THE MODERATOR: Perhaps to start, Kim, I thought you might like to reflect on your stay here in Montreal and coming through qualifying.

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Yeah, I have really enjoyed being in Montreal so far. I haven't been here since 2017.

Yeah, it's a beautiful city, and I've always had fond memories. I was looking forward to coming back.

Then qualifying in a 1000 is really special. I've only played a few 1000s in my career, so yeah, really trying to savor the moment.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. You were in a tough situation playing up against a girl who hadn't played for three years, obviously. We all know what she can do, but was she maybe better than what you imaged, or ...**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: I can't really say that she was better than what I thought. I was expecting her to come out and play really well. I obviously grew up watching her play on TV.

I know what she's capable of. I mean, I watched her win the Australian Open. I also knew that she wouldn't come back unless she was fit enough and playing well. I think that's the type of person she is.

Obviously I don't know her, but she comes across as quite a perfectionist. Yeah, I knew it was going to be a big challenge. And obviously dealing with not just tennis; there was a lot of other things going on.

It was a big moment for her, and also a big moment for me, too. So, yeah, I don't think I played my best, but I think I gained some valuable lessons, and it was a really good experience for me.

**Q. Were you nervous? Do you think it has something to do with the result today?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: Of course, I was nervous. I think it's normal to experience nerves no matter if you are playing on one of the back courts or you happen to be playing on one of the biggest courts in the world.

So I was definitely dealing with some nerves, but as a professional athlete, you have to be able to cope under these kinds of conditions.

I guess for me I haven't experienced these kind of matches too often. I'm still playing some ITFs and WTA tournaments. So, like I said, it's just another great experience for me, and I hope that next time I get the opportunity to play someone like her or on a court like this, that I'll be able to cope with it in a better way.

**Q. From where we were sitting up in the stands she looked maybe a little bit rusty in the first couple of games. From your standpoint did she look like she hadn't played in three and a half years, or you didn't notice that all that much?**

KIMBERLY BIRRELL: I mean, yeah, I think considering everything, she did really well. I think credit to her.

She maybe didn't have the best start, but I don't think I did as well. So, yeah, it was pretty windy, and the conditions were kind of tough, too. There was a lot going on with the crowd. It was quite noisy.

I think it did take a little while for both of us to settle in, but I think, considering, she played really well, and she played the brand of tennis that I think she's known for.

She ran a lot of balls down, and she seems extremely fit. Yeah, she played well.

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