

HSBC Championships

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Queens Club

Katie Boulter

Press Conference

K. BOULTER/A. Tomljanovic

7-6, 1-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Katie, well done. A win in doubles and now a win in singles. Talk us through your match with Ajla and rallying after that second set.

KATIE BOULTER: Yeah, I knew it was going to be a really tough battle. She's someone who's got a lot of credibility on these courts. She's just such a tough competitor.

I actually thought she played really well today, very aggressive, which made it very tough for me, especially on my first match on grass for singles. It was difficult to kind of get my adjustment steps in, because it was coming so quickly, but I felt like I did so well to stay mentally strong. Actually sometimes the biggest wins are these ones, because they're the ones that give you the confidence.

Yeah, I'm very happy with the win today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Obviously your serve didn't sometimes come off today. Is there any particular reason behind that? Was it the wind or something else?

KATIE BOULTER: I actually think she returned extremely well today. She's one of the better returners, and that's why she makes it so tough on these courts. She actually barely gave me anything. I had to hit the perfect serve to really get anything from it.

So I actually think there is definitely a lot of credit to her there, because they put so much pressure on me as the server. I do feel like I, at times, missed a few too many first serves when I would have liked to have made them, but again, I think that's partly her putting pressure on me.

Also just lost my rhythm a little bit, I think. I think I just tried to start making the first serve which sometimes just doesn't work. You've just got to keep hitting it and going after it.



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Yeah, I think I'll probably practice that a little more tomorrow. Yeah, I mean, she actually returned pretty well.

Q. I think you and Emma are sort of match for match on the British No. 1 thing now. I know we probably make more of it than you guys every think of it. But when you became British No. 1 for the first time, it felt like a big deal to you. I wonder whether it would mean just as much to hang on to that? And also, how good it is to have three of you in the top 50, which hasn't happened for, like, 40 years, I think.

KATIE BOULTER: Yeah, firstly, that last one is awesome. I mean, it's really nice to see the state of British tennis getting better and better every single year. I feel like I'm extremely happy to see great people doing really good things.

You know, each and every one of them works extremely hard, and I actually have a lot of confidence in all of them. I've said it to Sonay from day one. I think she's going to be a great player, and I think she's got such a good game on every single surface. So to see her coming through and being so consistent, it's great to see.

Also, you know, we all know what Emma is capable of. Incredible player, great person. Just very happy to see her also pushing me.

I think, you know, in terms of the British No. 1 conversation, I think obviously it holds a massive privilege being that person, but as I have said for the last two years, which I have held that position, I'm not focused on necessarily that. I'm focused on myself and keeping my ranking up where I want it to be.

Obviously this year I have slipped from 23 in the world to between 34 and 40, and for me unfortunately it's been quite difficult. You know, I started the year extremely well and found myself in a little bit of injury struggles and never really found that momentum.

Then we went straight on to the clay. So for me, I'm very focused on getting my ranking back up to where I want it to be. Honestly, I'm genuinely happy for every person to be doing well, and I hope they keep pushing me, but at the same time, I have to focus on myself and my day-to-day and take care of myself.



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Q. When we spoke a couple of days ago, you said how nice it was to come last year and watch Alex play. How nice was it to have the roles reversed and have him watch you play?

KATIE BOULTER: It was weird, actually (smiling). It was really nice. Yeah, it was great, because I have such fond memories of watching him. I think every time I have come down here, it's, like, the epitome of British, quintessential British life, and it's so nice to see everyone out here enjoying themselves, watching tennis, getting behind the tradition, and I was one of those people as a fan.

I find I really enjoy the sport when I'm watching. Obviously I have my own connection with Alex, which is another one on top of just coming down here and watching sport, but yeah, to have him in my box today, it meant a lot to me. And the fact he was able to be here, which he wasn't meant to be, it meant a little bit more on top of that.

Yeah, it was a little nice little role reversal for once, and hopefully he can be there for many more.

Q. Obviously you and Emma, being doubles partners this week, have you made a plan how much you will communicate with each other, especially on these days when you're in the singles? Are you not communicating at all or able to send a quick text back and forth?

KATIE BOULTER: Well, I hope she's still talking to me after yesterday (smiling). I mean, yeah, I think it's an everyday thing.

Yeah, I mean, I'm always very happy to see her doing well in singles. I'll probably send her a message when she smashes it over there.

So, yeah, we do talk a fair bit. Obviously the necessities, as well. Most likely she and I will play doubles tomorrow, so we will be warming up together, so we'll have to practice on that one.

Yeah, I hope she's still talking to me (smiling).

Q. This time of year comes with so much opportunity. There is also so much more tension around this kind of part of the season for British players as a whole. I know you love this time of year. But how do you kind of balance that extra tension on results alongside just enjoying it and having a free hit as much as possible as you would any other time of year?

KATIE BOULTER: Yeah, it's a tricky one, because obviously it is the best time of year for every British

player. I think all of us are extremely happy to be back on this surface and back in front of the British crowd, and we absolutely love it.

I do find that it's a little bit easier to be a bit lower ranked and almost be a wildcard coming into these tournaments. I think you can swing free and enjoy it a little bit more, and I think you'll see that a lot from the wildcards this week. Even already we have seen it. Some of them are playing unbelievable tennis. They all deserve to be at this level week in, week out. And I'm sure they will get there.

At the same time, for someone who is obviously expecting a lot from myself, it can be quite difficult, and, you know, I have to remind myself on a daily basis that I've got to enjoy it and I've got to just continue smiling and enjoying the journey. Yeah, as I said, it's the best time of year, and I have to do that. Yeah, just keep improving myself, and the rest will come.

Q. A question on the doubles partnership. You've got a name, Boultercanu. What do you make of that?

KATIE BOULTER: I mean, I love it (laughing). I don't know if there is any other variations. I haven't actually seen. Maybe I'll have a little look on social media. It's been a while since I have been on it. I will have a look and see what's going on, but I like that name. It's a great name if it sticks.

Q. I wonder, is a seeding at Wimbledon a big goal for the next few weeks, trying to get to that point?

KATIE BOULTER: I mean, yes, I would say being seeded at Wimbledon would be very helpful. It does make a difference in terms of ranking-wise who you play. But at the same time, it's not my sole focus.

I think I just want to kind build a bit of momentum coming into the grass season. I want to get as many matches under my belt before I get to Wimbledon, which is very important, which is why I have actually entered three tournaments before Wimbledon to see what I can get out of myself.

But in terms of actual seeding, I would love to be. It means my ranking is going up and I'm using the opportunity wisely, but at the same time, I also know I'm defending points this week, which obviously because there has been a schedule change, next week is Nottingham instead of this week, so I don't get a chance to defend those points unless I'm here in Queen's doing very well.

Yeah, I'm going to take it match by match, and it would be great to have that seeding, but it's not a be-all-and-end-all.

Q. You obviously love this venue and have always wanted the tournament here. Now that you have actually stepped out onto that center court and had the crowd get behind you and got a win on it, what were the emotions for you when all those things were going on?

KATIE BOULTER: Yeah, I feel like I had a lot of emotions today. I think it's very easy to get caught up in just trying to get your first grass court match. Also coming to such a historic venue, as well, which, you know, holds a lot of purpose and a lot of familiar feelings when I have come here before.

Yeah, I'm mostly grateful to be here and to be playing this tournament, and hopefully I can just be here for a bit longer. The emotions that I had when I walked out actually surpassed what I thought they'd feel like when I kind of imagined it. So that was really nice.

It was great to see that there were loads of people here today and watching and supporting. That actually just means a lot to me as a person and a player, and it does, I know, to a lot of the girls who are here and fighting and working their butts off -- sorry, I shouldn't say that -- yeah, for themselves.

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