

# US OPEN

Saturday, September 2, 2023

New York, New York, USA

## Madison Keys

### Press Conference

M. KEYS/L. Samsonova

5-7, 6-2, 6-2

**THE MODERATOR:** Three-set win. Tell us what happened after the first set. What clicked in after the first set for you?

**MADISON KEYS:** I mean, I think in the first set obviously I had those breakpoints at 6-5 and just couldn't quite get across the finish line with them.

But I felt like I was in so many of the games and I had, you know, even leads in a lot of her service games, so I just kept thinking just keep putting pressure on her. As soon as I got those break chances in the second and was able to convert, I felt like a weight kind of lifted off of me and I just ran with the momentum after that.

**THE MODERATOR:** Questions.

**Q. Liudmila, as we knew, was going to be a first-strike exchange and how you were able to overcome her best as she brought in the first set. The match player that you're becoming whenever you get resistance now you're able to then bounce and then overcome that?**

**MADISON KEYS:** It was exactly as I expected it was going to go today. She can play very high level, and it was just kind of trying to weather the storm and see if I had an opportunity. Then when I did have the opportunity being able to take that. Like I said, yeah, it played out exactly like I was expecting to. Obviously very happy able to get back into that match and kind of play on my terms.

**Q. Right now your next opponent is on the court, so I'm going to ask you if it's okay about both.**

**MADISON KEYS:** No (smiling).

**Q. You have been through this drill many, many times. First, if it's Svitolina, what are your thoughts on the challenges of facing her? And also on her story.**



**MADISON KEYS:** I think she's obviously been playing some incredible tennis coming back. Not that many matches, and she's already seeded again.

I mean, she's an incredible tennis player, but she's even a better competitor. I mean, any time, I think almost every time I have played her it's been three sets or tough. I have lost to her a few times.

I mean, if she's able to beat Jess, then, I mean, it just shows she's playing some really good tennis and it's going to be an incredibly difficult match.

**Q. If it is Jess, how would you describe the similarities and differences between your games and your thoughts on the key to the match playing against her?**

**MADISON KEYS:** I think Jess probably plays a little bit flatter than I do. But I think maybe if I have the advantage on the serve, she has the advantage on the return.

You know, I think we kind of are opposites a little bit. But I mean, she's been playing some amazing tennis the past few years. I mean, it's going to be a really difficult match no matter who wins.

**Q. Caroline Wozniacki has made it to the second week after three-and-a-half years. What do you think of her comeback?**

**MADISON KEYS:** I'm really impressed with Caroline's level. I thought especially yesterday I thought that's her best match she's played so far. She's kind of bounced back really quickly. It seems like, I mean, for me it feels like it was just yesterday that she was still playing. Doesn't seem like that long for me. It's incredibly impressive coming back from two kids.

**Q. Should that be possible after being away for so long, in general?**

**MADISON KEYS:** Yeah, I mean, I think it's possible. She's incredibly fit. I mean, there is lots of moms on tour, so I think it's, you know, kudos to her, but I think it's becoming more of the norm.

**Q. What did your box tell you after that first set and how you were able to stay composed and the strength**



**they keep on giving you to turn around some of these matches?**

**MADISON KEYS:** The biggest thing was to try to play more on my terms and not let her dictate quite as much when I had the opportunity to step up and try to go for things a little bit more and try to get myself to the net. I think doing that just kind of changed how I was going about points. I think I was a little bit more passive in the first set and kind of letting her take advantage of the point.

I mean, it's been really great having that box support and being able to have those kind of conversations. Just the little things here or there, that can make a huge difference in a match.

**Q. When you beat Andreeva at Wimbledon and turned around that match from all the pressures of facing off against the expectations, and then you were able to do that with showing improved defense, can you just describe how, whenever there is not a plan A from you or the A game from you is working, that you can be able to then show the versatility and to fight back?**

**MADISON KEYS:** It's definitely something that I have worked on for a while, trying to have a plan B and even a plan C if that's not working. Trying to balance, you know, going after my shots.

And then I think there are a lot of times where I'm able to get out of situations with my defense and now trying to get to the net even more, just constantly trying to get a little bit better and be a little bit more competitive out here.

**Q. It's a really great accomplishment at this stage of your career to make this solid, wonderful run at the US Open. Can you just talk about your career and the balance between the great upsides, the glamour, the big checks, big arenas, and yet the grind, ferocity, how tough it is, how it sort of tests your spirit? Could you just talk about that balance and how you did it.**

**MADISON KEYS:** I think that there's obviously been some really great highs and there's been some lows. I think when you're looking at people's careers, almost everyone has a year or two that are really tough. Being able to kind of see the light at the end of the tunnel in those years and just keep the best perspective that you can during those years is the most important, because I think those are the years that can really feel like they're taking years off of your career.

So just having a better perspective of, I mean, my worst year at my job is still traveling the world and playing tennis. Realistically it's not that bad.

**Q. He referred to the grind, and you were addressing your perspective from a career view. When you think of what it takes to go deep in majors, which you have experienced, what is that grind like physically and mentally both during the tournament and all the time leading up to it?**

**MADISON KEYS:** I mean, I think mentally is different obviously, just because you're dealing with, you know, going into the tournament, the pretournament nerves, and then getting through your first rounds, and then, you know, the pressure kind of is building as each match that comes.

Then physically sometimes you feel great; other times you don't feel great and you have to figure out how to get through things.

It's definitely, I think it's a learned skill, you know, the people that can do it consistently and at the end of a slam still feel pretty good, I'm incredibly impressed with. Any time I have ever had a really good run at a slam, I basically sleep for three days, just because it is. It's really emotional, and it definitely takes a lot just to learn how to handle those emotions.

**Q. When you do win and it's on Ashe Stadium and you're hitting the balls into the crowd, what's going through your mind and where are you looking to hit them?**

**MADISON KEYS:** Usually it's just that you hope that you're actually going to hit the person you're attempting to so hopefully you don't majorly miss and it falls back on the court or something.

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