

BNP Paribas Open

Monday, March 13, 2017

Madison Keys

Press Conference

M. KEYS/N. Osaka

6-1, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Are you happy with that win?

MADISON KEYS: Yeah, definitely. First set, it obviously was a little bit easier, but I think she raised her level, for sure. I think my service games were really good, got me out of trouble a couple of times.

Overall, I'm just happy to be out here, happy to have another win, happy to get to play tomorrow.

Q. Honestly, what were your expectations before this tournament?

MADISON KEYS: Not very high (smiling). I was, like, if I get a set, I'll be happy. And a win -- it's always tough to come back and everyone is in the middle of their season. I definitely had really low expectations, which is probably why, when I was up there and serving for the match in the first round, I was, like, Oh, this is exciting. I didn't think this was going to happen.

Yeah, I'm just happy with all of it.

Q. Are you seeing how you're hitting the ball in practice completely translate to how you're doing it in the match court?

MADISON KEYS: It definitely feels like that. I think it's good, because last year I feel like there were so many matches where I had to figure it out and tough it out, and I wasn't playing well.

These last two matches have kind of been -- I mean, minor hiccup, but it seems like everything is, like, okay, this is what I have been working on, trying to come to the net more and trying to do this more. I feel like I have been doing that in matches.

Q. Do you feel like being away from the game made you see more clearly?

MADISON KEYS: It definitely made me appreciate it a lot more. The end of the season, kind of like from US Open on, was really tough for me. Everything was painful, and it was really hard to just get myself out there and keep practicing and keep doing it.



Being in Singapore was great, but it was also, like, God, this is a grind. I can't wait to get to the finish line.

Now, being able to hit, and, it's, like, pain-free, it's great. So that's definitely been a big blessing for me.

Q. How have you pulled up? How did you feel after your first match physically? I talked to a bunch of players who had three or four weeks off, and they were like, I could not walk after my first match.

MADISON KEYS: Yesterday I was like, oh, my God, my back hurts, my shoulders hurt, everything is sore. There were areas that I didn't think had muscles hurt.

And so -- oh, my grandma is calling me. Sorry.

Yeah, everything was so sore. I was laughing. I was talking and I was, like, you forget that stuff. You forget how you can't move the next day.

But I was, like, Hey, it's a good sore. I won. It would hurt a lot more if I had lost that.

Q. So if you do have to play again tomorrow right away, are you worried about that being a problem?

MADISON KEYS: No, I don't think so. Honestly, I think once you kind of get into the groove and you have had that first match, you have dealt with those nerves, and all of that, you kind of settle in in a lot of ways. So I'm not really concerned about that.

Q. Were you surprised with the scoreline tonight? Given the epic match you had at the US Open not that long ago, what was the difference between then and now?

MADISON KEYS: I'm just glad it wasn't like that (smiling).

You know, I think I definitely -- I knew that at any point she could kind of step up her level, because I don't think she played as well as she wanted to tonight.

So I kind of knew that at every moment, every opportunity that I had was one that I had to be smart about. I'm still kicking myself about the missed return at 3-1 breakpoint.

It's little moments like that where you can let someone back in. That was the one thing where I knew I was

going to have to be really good about that. She played a much better second set. It really could have gone either way.

Q. Wrist injuries kind of suck, wrist surgery sucks, and we have seen that. How scared were you and what was the most worried that you got about the state of your career, comeback, any of that?

MADISON KEYS: I was fairly nervous going in, and then when you're in a cast. It's like you can't really think about it. You don't really know what's going on in there.

And then they take it off, and you go to move your wrist, and you're, like, Oh, it's not moving. Okay.

That's when, like, the first, like, stress really hit me. It wasn't fun. But then it was, you know, slowly getting my range of motion back and stuff.

By the way, rehab sucks, too.

Q. Did you have to do, like, the little micromovement?

MADISON KEYS: Oh, yeah. Like, I couldn't do anything. For the longest time, I still couldn't turn my steering wheel and I couldn't use my left hand doing this and that. It was tough, and it was really stressful.

There were so many times when I'd be fine for, like, a week or a month or whatever, and then all of a sudden I'd be, Oh, my God, guys. What if I never win a match again? What if it's over?

And that's when my team was really great about, Take a breath. It is fine. Like, you won matches when every time you hit the ball you were, like, in horrible amounts of pain. You can do this. And then kind of, like, Okay, I can do that.

But, I mean, this tournament has helped kind of ease a lot of that, as well.

Q. Similar path from the US Open where you played Osaka and it looks, barring a major turnaround, Wozniacki next. What do you remember about that match? She was very good that day.

MADISON KEYS: She was very good that day, and it seemed like she found my backhand all of the time. At that moment I was just, like, this is horrible.

But, no, I think she played so well that day. But different courts, different time, all of that. She's always tough and she's been playing really well this year being in two finals already.

So it's going to be a tough match. Again, I'm just, like,

hey, I get to have another one. I get to go out and have another scouting report and all of that.

So I'm excited about it.

Q. It's not often that players get that -- injury aside, but even once you start to come back, get a contained block to work on your game and fine-tune and work on physical stuff, as well. Are there things that are different -- is there a Madi 2.0 right now? Are there things that have been added to your game that you find you're much better at now than you were before?

MADISON KEYS: If you haven't noticed, I have come to the net a couple of times. I hit a dropshot.

Q. It was good.

MADISON KEYS: Thank you. I was really proud of myself, too. I was, like, huh, that was good. I worked on my slice a ton, obviously, because I had months where I couldn't do anything else. There were a lot of things I got to work on, which was great.

And also, I got to work with Scott for, like, the longest period of time without a tournament coming up. We worked on a lot of just little things we haven't been able to.

So I feel like I'm in the best shape that I have probably ever been in. Just feeling more comfortable coming to the net, using a slice, all of that.

In a lot of ways it was really good to kind of just have the time to work on my game.

Q. From our perspective, as media people, we would look at you and Naomi as the future of the women's game, potentially winning slams and playing slam finals. Do you see it the same way? How does your perspective differ or is the same to ours? Do you ever think about that?

MADISON KEYS: To be honest, I don't really think about it. I do think she's -- I mean, she's already a good player. I think she's going to be a great player.

She reminds me a lot of myself and how she plays. I think she's going to figure out how to put her game together.

When you hit that big and you have those options, sometimes it's tough to make the right decision. So I think she's going to be a really good player.

You know, as far as thinking of myself that way, I have surprised myself in a lot of ways, being in the top 10 and all of that. It's taken a while for me to think, you know, this is where I got here myself and I deserve to

be here.

That still sometimes is kind of hard for me to fully accept, but, you know, I'd happily play a slam final against Naomi Osaka one day.

Q. Are you playing Fed Cup at the moment? Are you going to be available?

MADISON KEYS: I'm available. It's pretty close to Orlando, so I figure I could drive. Even if I don't play, I'll probably be there supporting and all of that.