

BNP Paribas Open

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Karolina Pliskova

Press Conference

S. KUZNETSOVA/K. Pliskova

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THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. It's a tough night tonight, but you really had two years of runs here in the desert. Last year you were also in the semifinal and also here in the doubles. Keeping all of that in perspective, how are you feeling about this event and your performance here in general?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Yeah, not much to say to this match tonight and to the one where I played last year, because both I was pretty close.

Both I had some chances to win, and unfortunately I played good players. So it's always 50/50 with those players. You have to play the best tennis to beat them. I'm sure Svetlana is gonna do well in the final. Doesn't matter whether she win or not. I think she's just tough in this tournament to play in these conditions today.

In the evening, especially, the balls were not as fast as during the day. I think it was a little bit colder tonight.

Yeah, definitely I think I played -- I don't want to say good, but, yeah, best match, so the last one and best in the tournament, best match in the tournament.

Yeah, like I said, I had some chances even in the first set. Even in the second, I was up a game but easy one I lost. Tiebreaks unfortunately I didn't play well. She played better and served well in the tiebreak. My serve was off. The whole tournament my serve was off. But at least I got used to it. Actually, the whole tournament I was playing without the serve.

Yeah, but good match. I needed a match like this to have -- it's my third what I lost this year, and I think the best from those matches what I lost. So definitely there are positives.

Leaving to Miami tomorrow or after tomorrow and gonna try to change the record there.

Q. You say your serve was off and you got some strapping on today. Is that a worry going into Miami?



KAROLINA PLISKOVA: No, not really. Even tonight doesn't even have any influence on my serve. I felt a little bit tight hand and thought the tape was gonna help it.

So the hand was fine. Doesn't have anything to do with the serve (smiling).

Q. Was it a case of Sveta just being too good today? She played a very, very good match, very high level?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Yes, I thought so. She was not missing much. Like I said, in this condition when she hit those angles with the spin, just really difficult for me just to, you know, attack and play aggressive. Sometimes I was just out of my position where I actually want to be on the court.

I had some good points, I think, where I was playing tennis where, like, the one I wants to play. Yeah, few points she was just dictating. And, actually, the main points, obviously the one volley in first set, was the biggest miss, I think, of the match and the biggest chance because could be set point. I think, if I would win the first set being two breaks down would be totally different in the second.

Everything was tough, going through the rally, also because my serve was off. Was a lot of rallies. A lot of hard balls. Yeah, I don't think it was a bad match.

Q. Were there any lingering after-effects? Racquet hit the chair? You seemed bothered by it.

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: No, not really. I just wanted to do winner down the line. It didn't really happen. It slipped a little bit. She hit a good serve.

So, yeah, I was not sure where she got it, the chair umpire, but she said she was fine. So hopefully not in the head. The game was 15-40, I think, so not much to do there anymore.

Q. You were getting frustrated towards the end of the match. Was it more just frustration with the results or frustration with the tiebreak? Where was the frustration coming from?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Yeah, overall I spend two hours and I lost in two sets. I just thought I had some chances. Even I had the balls on my racquet, so not

always was it that she was doing winners, you know.

So I could do better definitely in some points. Yeah, even the last point I could do better, but it was 6-2, so probably I would lose anyway. Obviously disappointed with the tiebreaks, so I could do much better there.

Yeah, I don't think the key was the tiebreak. Obviously, you can still win it. But with her always difficult. She makes you play every point. You really have to make winners.

Tonight I think she was not missing much from the baseline. So she was really playing well. Definitely feeling the ball. She was even serving well. I played her a few times, and different conditions twice. So I think I would say this was the best match what I have played against her from her side.

Yeah. And I even don't know if I broke the racquet or not in the end, so I have to check.

Q. You have been in a position on the tour since about 2015 where expectation is starting to creep in. Your ranking is increasing and you're continuing to improve. You seem to be handling it well and not seeming to have a lot of weight around that. How is that for you? How are you feeling?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I mean, like I said already before, there is always some kind of pressure. It's always different kind of pressure if you're -- I don't know -- outside of top 50, want to be top 50 and want to play good against top players. If you're seeded, then you just don't want to lose with the players which are behind you.

There is always something. I'm just trying to handle it. I think I'm doing pretty well at that. I just don't want to, you know, think much about the things around and just still playing my tennis.

Even not always I'm playing well. I'm just trying to win those matches somehow, which was the case in this tournament. I think I improved, especially in this. When I don't have good days, I can still win tough matches and beat tough players, actually, because on those tournaments like this, you don't have an easy round.

That's what I improved, and those matches, even I'm just -- I think mentally I'm better even with the matches what I lose. I just try to take positives and just to move on so it doesn't get me really down.

Obviously I'm disappointed, but still trying to move forward and work on few things and still believing that I

can get better than I am.

Q. Fed Cup. I'm curious where Fed Cup factors into your thinking, kind of about the year, and whether it's something that's in the back of your mind and you only come to the front of the mind sort of the week of Fed Cup or more presence in your thinking through the year?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Definitely right now not thinking about Fed Cup at all. It's still, after Miami, I guess, still after two weeks after Miami. I'm going to see how it's gonna be the situation with Fed Cup for this year with me.

But, yeah, I have played for two-and-a-half years right now. I think Fed Cup helped me. I helped to Fed Cup. Yeah, I won two titles, and really happy with that. I don't know how it's gonna be in future.

The schedule is obviously tough, especially when you go far in tournaments. It's not easy just to put it there. Even it's only three weeks in a year. Doesn't even have to be three weeks.

But, yeah, I might change few things.

Q. At the Australian Open you said you weren't playing all that great. Here you said you didn't have your serve. What's the best match you think you have played?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: That's definitely tough to play, because I don't think I have played many good matches this year. Obviously two titles, semis here, and quarters in Melbourne, but for me the tournament in Brisbane was the best. I was feeling maybe also because the opponents were the ones what I like, but I was feeling good, semis and final.

And definitely Doha, I think -- I played everywhere solid. Not really something great and really cosmic tennis, but it was enough to beat some players and even this tournament.

So definitely nothing from this tournament, but since -- yeah, maybe this one was even I lost it, it was close, at least, in my mind. I just gonna talk to David later, but I was trying at least to do some things what we were practicing, which was not happening in the last matches before. So this one, at least, there was something from the practice.

Yeah, but I lost, so tough to say. Like 100% I'm not satisfied with any of the matches this year, but I think they were pretty solid and there was some good things in the matches.

Q. Since you were in the US Open final, I'm just

curious how that affected your thinking heading into this whole year and kind of thinking, planning, goals, that kind of thing. Did it make -- did it change how you were thinking about the future?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Didn't really change my thinking the future, but definitely changed the way how I'm taking Grand Slams now. I just want to say one more time doesn't mean that I was in the final that I'm going to be now again in every Grand Slam in semis, quarters, or final.

But the next one what I play was in Melbourne, and definitely gave me some confidence to coming to Grand Slam, and even, like I said, was not feeling well there. I still did the quarters, which the years before I was not able to pass those matches like this.

So it helped me really to get first time through the third round and just to know how is it to play in the last stages of the Grand Slam. And definitely it's also big plus in tournaments like this. I knew I was playing semis last year here, but always give you some confidence you can make it better and far in the tournaments like this when everyone is playing, the top players is there, and there is a bigger draw.

So it's not tournament for one week or not even one week. It's for two weeks. It's always tougher to play those tournaments which is longer than one week. You have to really be ready for those two weeks, and just make it somehow working, because with those days off it's never easy. That's what Grand Slams are, as well.

So I think I have that experience already, and gonna use it even on the next Grand Slam and in the next half of the year.