

# Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

Wednesday, February 22, 2017

## Catherine Bellis

Press Conference

C. BELLIS/A. Radwanska

6-4, 2-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. How does it feel to get your first top-10 win?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Whew, amazing. It's one of the best feelings in my life, for sure. I'm really happy about the outcome tonight.

**Q. When she came back in the second set, what did you tell yourself to stay on track? Were you feeling confident heading into the third?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Yeah, I think in the second set she started playing a little bit better. I went off a little bit. I think I was going for a little bit too much.

I think I just told myself stay calm and go back to my game and what I was doing in the first set.

**Q. Were you surprised by how many errors you were able to kind of get from her in the final set? You were incredibly solid from the baseline.**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Yeah, I think I just -- yeah, I just told myself to really be as solid as possible, and then when I had a short ball to take advantage of it right away.

Yeah, I was a little bit surprised, but, I mean, she's such an amazing player. It was probably not her best day.

**Q. How has it felt for you this week just backing up each win? How has it been for you each day?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Amazing. Yeah, it feels really good. I think I'm definitely playing some of my best tennis right now.

**Q. Did you expect this at all? First WTA major of the season, coming off injury?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: No, definitely not. But I'm so happy, and I work so hard for it. I think my work is paying off.

**Q. How difficult has it been, or easy has it been, since you have been on the pro tour since**



**September?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: I have had kind of a dream couple of months since I have turned pro, but obviously it's not always going to be as happy-go-lucky, so I have been really lucky so far.

**Q. You did have that pause for the injury, but also the way you finished the year, are you in the same kind of mindset of that or...**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Yeah, definitely. Yeah, I tried to pick up right where I left off, for sure.

**Q. Is there part of you where you are thinking, oh, my friends, some of them are still back playing the juniors, and here I am beating a top-10 player?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: I mean, it's kind of crazy. I guess I have been a little bit lucky with some of the matches I have had.

I'm really just enjoying it more just thinking about how much fun I'm having and what an experience it's been for me so far.

**Q. We see some other players -- I remember speaking to maybe Sloane, she would come here and feel so far away from home and it was so new for her. How do you feel when you're traveling to all these places? Do you ever feel any, I don't know, culture shocks or anything different?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: I really love traveling, and Dubai has been definitely one of my favorite places I have been so far. I have never been anywhere around here. So I have really loved it so far.

**Q. What do you like about Dubai?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Everything is just perfect (smiling). I feel like everything is so nice. I went to the mall before the tournament, and it was so amazing.

I'm planning on doing one of those camel rides after the tournament and a few other things if we get the time.

**Q. I know it's only been a few minutes after that win, but how does that compare to the win over Domi at the US Open? Very different circumstances, but it's hard to say which one is like the career win for you from your perspective.**

**What do you think?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Right. I would say right now is more important to me because when I was playing in the other match against Dominika, I was so young. I couldn't really back that up back then because of my strength in my body and there was so much going on.

Now I feel like I'm able to win more matches consistently. I think my game can, you know, hang with these girls a little bit better now. I think this means a little bit more to me.

**Q. Where do you feel the fitness improvements the most on court?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: I think the longer the matches go, I don't feel tired at all. I just feel really strong. After long points, I don't feel winded. I just feel like I'm ready, get to the next point. I feel just really good.

**Q. Who travels with you?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: My coach and my hitting partner. My coach actually had to leave to get back to USTA for some meetings, so he wasn't here tonight to see this, unfortunately (smiling). He's probably watching right now, though.

**Q. So mom or dad don't travel?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: They're not here for this tournament, no. They're back at home.

**Q. I have to ask a fashion question, because it seems like the top is like a green and the bottom is like a yellow. Does it come like that?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: It came like that. Yeah, I'm not really sure what's going on. I kind of like it. It's kind of different, and the skirt matches my -- no, it doesn't, actually (laughter).

I've got like six different colors of green going on. But I like it a lot. It's a little different.

**Q. Can you talk about Caroline Wozniacki and just how you would approach a match like that if it is her?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: I think I'd approach it pretty similar to how I approached it today. Both Radwanska and Wozniacki have been, you know, my idols since I was really young and watched them play on the TV since I was five years old.

It will be an honor to play either Wozniacki or Bondarenko. I'm just really excited to be here. Really happy.

**Q. You mentioned the mall trip before. Are these the sorts of runs you plan to reward yourself a little bit?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: For sure, for sure.

**Q. With what?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Just anything I see that I like (smiling).

**Q. It's a good mall.**

CATHERINE BELLIS: I think there is ice-skating there, too. Definitely going to do that.

**Q. And an aquarium.**

CATHERINE BELLIS: I think I heard at a different mall there is skiing. I'm doing that, for sure, for sure. We are staying an extra day, staying an extra day just to do the malls and the camels and everything.

**Q. Camels and the skiing?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Pack it all into one day.

**Q. When you go shopping, is it clothes, jewelry?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Both. Yeah, both. Just whatever I'm in need of. I'm not really in need of anything right now, but just kind of looking around.

**Q. Do you drive back home? Will you buy yourself a car or anything like that?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: I have a car in Florida right now where I train, so my parents got me it, though. I didn't buy it.

**Q. So you're in Orlando?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Yeah, Orlando.

**Q. That's got to be a rude awakening for somebody who is from San Francisco.**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Yeah, actually, surprisingly, I like it a lot. My parents took a little bit of -- it took them a little bit longer to get used to, because we all just love California so much.

That will always be home. We still have our house there. We go back for holidays and everything. We just think of Orlando as more of a training base.

**Q. So your parents have moved there, too?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Yeah, they're with me, yes.

**Q. There are several girls of your age or similar at this tournament. I was wondering, do you get along with them, or...**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Yeah, yeah. I know a few of the girls my age. Kasatkina, I played her throughout juniors a little bit in her final year of juniors. All the Americans, I'm really good friends with.

Lauren won today, which I'm really excited about. Christina almost won. We were all cheering for her.

Yeah, it's a really good day for American tennis.

**Q. What does this win mean to you?**

CATHERINE BELLIS: Everything. Yeah, it's definitely obviously the biggest win of my career, and probably one of the best days of my life.