

Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

Sunday, February 18, 2018

Karolina Pliskova

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Your thoughts on being back here.

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Well, I'm just happy to be back here. The weather is nice. Better than last year. So far enjoying my stay here. Two years back I was playing finals. For sure I have good chance to go far again.

The draw is very strong. There is not any easy match. Not really a match which can warm me up. It's going to be very tough for me first round.

Q. So many changes in the top of the ladies' game last year. Do you think it's good?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I don't know if it's good, but it's like that, so...

Q. I mean, to have so many changes. Is better to have one solid No. 1 everybody knows?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I don't know what is better. I think it doesn't really matter. You still have to face the opponent and you still have to try to do your best. So for me doesn't matter if I face No. 1, and she's not No. 1 next week. I think that's just very good opponents.

The ranking is changing because it's very close, everything. It's very open for everybody. Right now from the top 10, I feel like they have the chance to win big tournaments.

But I would not say it's bad. It's just like this. I feel like the players are good. They are solid. They are playing very good. They are consistent. That's why it's just so close.

Q. How important was it for you to be No. 1? How important is it for you to try to get back to No. 1?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Important was to get there, so I know I'm able to do it, I'm able to play all year consistently. We don't have any big waves, we don't have any big upsets, which I think is quite hard to play all year like this, especially when you know there's so many good players behind you. Also having this same, like, consistency.

To get back there, I would not say I don't want to get



back there, but I don't think there is so much difference to be No. 1 than to be No. 5 for me. I think the pressure and everything is the same. You are still coming to the torments, most of the tournaments, like, the favorite, may not the top favorite, but still the favorite. I feel like that.

For me just was good experience that I was there. But some ranking for me doesn't matter that much.

Q. Did you feel different when you were No. 1?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Look, I was there for eight weeks (smiling). It was not like I would be there for two years, now it will change.

Q. Even the first day you're No. 1, do you feel different?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: No, not really. Not really. I was not even on the court. Maybe it change little bit when I was playing the tournaments after in States. Actually in Canada first, then States.

Like I said, the pressure maybe is a little bit bigger because when you look at the draw, somebody is No. 1, you expect him to win the tournament. This was little bit, like, more pressure put on myself. Otherwise for me, completely no different feeling now and back in those weeks.

Q. In the past someone has gotten to No. 1, stayed there for weeks and months. When it changes so often like last year, is that more of a change, to be able to get there and stay there?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: For sure. The girls, for Caro right now, I think it's going to be a challenge just to stay there long. I think she's starting to play amazing, so she's going to have a chance to stay there for a couple of months, let's say.

She was there. She knows how to play. For her it's a little bit different story than for us, which we were there for like a few weeks.

Like I talk already before, because it's so close with the points, the tournaments, that's why it's changing so much. I think it's always going to be close. For now, if Serena is not getting back where she was, I think it's going to be like this, changing a lot.

Q. Three former No. 1's are now on their way back: Serena, Vika, Maria. Is it going to be hard for them to get back to the level they were with a new group of players like yourself, Svitolina?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I think it's always hard to get back after whatever injury you have, a birth of child or whatever is happening to them. I think it's just hard to get back where you missed some time during the career. You're missing practices, you're missing tournaments. The experience is just different.

For them, if they would keep playing all the time, it would be different. You can maybe miss some matches, and it can take a while to get back for them.

All of them, as you just said, they're great players and champions. They have the experience of being there. But I think it can take some time to get back.

Q. Roger Federer became No. 1 on Friday again. How do you see his achievement at 36?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I think for me he's not playing better than he was playing couple of years ago, but right now he found a great shape. I feel like he's enjoying what he's having around. It's always fun to watch him.

By having Nadal there, I think it validates. That's what's helping them to get better still, although they don't even have to play because they won so many things. They're still trying to be the best.

For them, I think to get back to No. 1 after a couple years, also the same for Nadal, it's amazing and for sure special.

Q. Has your sister learnt anything from your success, what you've achieved, how you achieved it?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: That's probably a question for her. Hopefully yes. I try to inspire not only my sister but maybe few more people. We're very close on the court, off the court. We don't practice very much because we fight when we practice.

Just sometimes trying to not talk only about tennis, but about different things. I don't want to give her some experience by being No. 1. She has different career, different story, different team.

I think if she got inspired, I'm happy, but that's it. I'm not going to give her more advices.

Q. Why is Wimbledon a problem for you?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I don't know (smiling). This tournament is just not really good for me. But I try to change everything every year. I try to change house. I

try to change everything. Still I play bad and still without a good result. There is the next chance this year.

Every year I win a title on grass, but Wimbledon is problem. So we will see this year.

Q. How do you sum up your year so far? How does that give you confidence coming into this event?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I think I started for sure pretty solid, not the best. But having couple of matches, I think it's always good in the beginning of the season. It can be important when you follow up some tournaments, just have to couple of matches. I played some good matches. I think Australia was okay, was solid. Yeah, had to skip Fed Cup week. I was sick. Doha was not the best. Now getting better. I can feel better, play better a little bit here.

But we are just beginning. Everything can change so quickly with one tournament, one week or two weeks. Big tournaments ahead of us. Yeah, excited. I think it's going to be tough by defending so many points, so many good results every week.

Q. Obviously getting to the final here a few years ago, you haven't had the best results since then here. What do you put that down to? The strength of the draw...

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: For me it's always tough to change quickly tournaments and places. Last year I was playing great in Doha but came pretty late here. I think the conditions are so much different. I'm a player which needs couple of days to practice when you want to play well. I don't hit, I go straight to my match, I cannot play well like this.

It's just those tournaments here, either I play well here or I play well in Doha. Hopefully this time I have more time to get used to these conditions here and play better.

Otherwise I like the tournament. I think even the conditions for me should be fine. It's pretty fast. There is not any other problem.

Q. What have you gotten to see in Dubai? Have you been able to look around?

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I've been here quite a lot of time. Few holidays already in my life here. Few times I played this tournament. So been traveling a lot to Dubai. Always see the airport.

I've been in shopping mall, which is not a tourist thing. I like to go to shopping mall. There is a huge one here so you can find everyone what you are missing in Europe. It's here. I've been in some nice places here,

nice hotels, nice beaches, restaurants.

I just like the city. I think there's a lot of things to do here, for sure. The weather is always great. I think I don't remember when it was raining here.

Q. Last year.

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Last year I lost in first round and it was not raining (smiling).

I think it's a good place for a tournament. There should be more.