

# Rothesay International

Monday, 26 June 2023

Eastbourne, England, UK

Devonshire Park

## Karolina Pliskova

### Press Conference

Ka. PLISKOVA/E. Mertens

6-7, 6-3, 3-0 [Ret.]

THE MODERATOR: Obviously not great that matches end in retirement, but that was a very tough outing for you today. Just talk us through the match.

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Yeah, I thought definitely not an easy start for the first round. She's always tough. I lost to her a couple of times, but I thought we had some good rallies. The first two sets I thought we played good tennis.

Of course I would love to end it in a normal way, but, I mean, I'm in the second round, which is good (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Your service motion that you had, was that changed up today because of the wind? I know Sascha was saying something about how he wanted you to come, before the serve, to think about it a little differently than you used to, it goes through your head a bit and maybe it's a change. Could you talk about that and if you're changing your service motion entirely?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: No, not the motion. The motion, not that I notice, but it's the same for the last many years, so this I try not to change it. But maybe the toss a little bit, of course you need to play a little bit with the wind, because if you're against the wind, then you can hit it more. Today was a lot of wind, and the wind was changing a lot so it was not easy for the timing to have it every time the same.

But yeah, I'm definitely not trying to change anything about my serve unless there are some, like, for sure you're gonna have days where the serve is not working, but I think the motion has to stay the same. That's the key how you find, you know, the rhythm and the serve.

**Q. With the ball bouncing, I notice you're bouncing...**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Oh, the ball bouncing. Yeah, and on grass the ball doesn't bounce so I just don't do it,

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yeah.

**Q. On other surfaces you have months to improve, clay and hard, but on grass it's three weeks. How difficult is that to like improve as a grass court player when there is so little time playing on it?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Yeah, I mean, of course there is not much, you know, time in tournaments, and then you can play tough opponents in the first round so you just don't have many matches.

But that's why I say every match is super important no matter how it goes and how, if you play bad or not, then you just go through somehow and you have a next match, then you just improve by the time which you spend on the court.

But of course I also feel like the years on tour, they help. You know, if it's like the first year when you just like play on the grass for the first time, then it's of course difficult. But then once you play and then you know a little bit how to use the game, the surface, and of course the movement, everything is a little bit different.

But it's very specific, but I feel like I had a lot of success on the grass, so I'm kind of confident to coming into this surface.

**Q. Do you remember that first time when you played on grass?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I think it was juniors, that year I played maybe quallies of Wimbledon and juniors Wimbledon. So I didn't do well (smiling). I remember that.

**Q. What was hard about it then when you first started?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: No, I think like nothing completely like that that would be one thing which also depends which opponent you're playing. There are some opponents which are really like super difficult to play on grass, and then some are maybe a little bit easier. So depends who you play. As I said, you need that experience just to play on this surface.

**Q. How are you feeling on the grass currently?**

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KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Well, good at the moment. I just got my first victory this year (smiling).

I think this tournament is very strong, so I know my next opponents they are just on court I think now, but it's going to be again difficult match, and I just hope to get maybe couple more matches here and then to be ready for Wimbledon.

**Q. At Wimbledon this year, they have introduced a rule where the women can wear the dark undershorts. Just curious of your thoughts on it and if it's something that ever worried you before?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: No, I was never worried about this, but I'm not going to wear black shorts. I think some girls maybe they had this issue so I think, yeah, it can be good for them, for the girls which they were struggling a little bit with this or they had a stress from it. I think it can help.

**Q. Do you generally like to play the week before slams? I know some players like that week off just to play exhibitions or just practice. Obviously you're playing this week, but how does that work into your preparation for slams?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Normally not, but I feel like here I always play this tournament. Then I just did well some weeks in Wimbledon; sometimes not.

I think it can go both ways, and because you don't have that many weeks on grass, I think it's just like I didn't play the first week, I just played last week in Berlin, and then you can have like a bad draw, which I had bad draw there. Then you can have a tough match and just play Wimbledon. Just with having one match on grass I think for me is not enough.

That's why I just usually play this week. I like the tournament. I had many success here, so that's why I always try to play it.

But usually like if it's like maybe Paris or like Australian Open, usually I didn't play the week before slams. But also depends if you're coming back from an injury, if you need to play, just, yeah, depends.

**Q. You just said that this is a special tournament. What makes it so special for you?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: I think the crowd really helps, because it's quite crowded on every match I think that support, I mean, for all the players, not just for me. I think it's nice to see, which normally in England I feel like it's always nice because people support tennis here a lot.

Of course the grass I think, you know, it's a good surface for me, so that's why I had many success, you know, in

the past on many courts on the grass courts, so I think for my game is perfect. I have good memories here. I think that's why it keeps coming.

**Q. You have you had a great career, being No. 1, won many good titles and done well at slams. If it all finished tomorrow, would you be completely satisfied with your career, or would you hope there would be one big win left in it, perhaps a slam?**

KAROLINA PLISKOVA: Yeah, of course to win a slam it's still the goal and the dream, but to be honest, I think at the moment there were -- I had couple years where I really thought, you know, and there was so much pressure on me that I should win it, I have to win it, and if I don't win it it's going to be disaster, but now I'm kind of like relaxed about it.

Of course I still want to win it, but if we finish tomorrow, I think I'll be fine (smiling).

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