

# Rothesay International

Monday, 26 June 2023

Eastbourne, England, UK

Devonshire Park

## Daria Kasatkina

### Press Conference

D. KASATKINA/A. Kalinina

6-3, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Dasha, a very solid win today. Just talk about your thoughts on the match and how happy you were to get through that.

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, of course I'm happy to get my first win on grass. As many matches as you can play on grass it's good and counts.

Yeah, I'm really happy with my performance today and really looking forward for the next match.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. You said it's your first win. How key is it this week to build up to Wimbledon?**

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, as I said, every match counts on grass court, because the season on grass is very short, and as many matches as you can play good.

Yeah, really happy that I'm here through the second round, and I played few doubles matches in Berlin. So I'm getting used to the grass, which is very important before Wimbledon.

**Q. Is it difficult knowing that for you and for players in general that you have so little time to get used to grass and to find rhythm, and if you don't, then it will be over quite quickly?**

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, yeah, it's a bit tricky, because maximum you can have like three tournaments before Wimbledon. So that's why players, I think most of them playing doubles, as well, on the grass court season, yeah, because you want to spend as much time on grass as possible, because this surface is tricky. Plus all the different tournaments, it's still a bit different, the surface is a bit different.

So, yeah, that's why, and we don't have a place to practice on grass, so we're just coming to the tournament few days prior and trying to practice as much as we can. So, yeah, this part of the season is a bit tricky, which

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makes it more interesting.

**Q. What is the first practice like after clay? What does that feel like?**

DARIA KASATKINA: Depends on the quality of the grass, to be honest. Depends where you're starting your grass court season (smiling).

But actually, most of the time, the first practice is going pretty well. The second one sucks all the time. Actually, yeah, the more you play on grass, the worse you feel (smiling).

Yeah, it is how it is. So actually even the practices are a bit different. You're trying just to play points as much as possible. You're not even making cleaning [ph.] with the coach because just makes no sense.

**Q. After last year, how does it feel to be back in the UK? How you have been received? How does it feel? Any different?**

DARIA KASATKINA: Honestly feels great. Today I played my first match in UK since two years. It's been two years already. And I really enjoyed, you know, being on court with actually almost full crowd on Monday. So it's pretty unusual.

Yeah, I'm really glad to be back and to have this opportunity to play the tournaments, and Wimbledon included.

**Q. Strange time, not sure if you can answer, how does it feel with what's going on in your homeland at the moment to be over here?**

DARIA KASATKINA: Feels shit, honestly. I'm not gonna hide it. It's tough to, you know, to face the circumstances for such a long time already. Unfortunately, as we see, particularly me or like tennis players, nothing we can do about it, so we have to just follow what's going on.

You know, me personally, I'm just trying to be a good human in this scenario. That's all I can do. And do my job as playing tennis. That's it.

**Q. I know the crowd reaction in Paris at your match against Elina was quite tough. What's it feel like when you come here and you know the crowd**

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**actually don't react, they don't boo? Does it feel like they understand and is it nicer to have that?**

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, of course it was a bit tough to leaving Roland Garros, my favorite tournament, the way I was leaving the court. But I understand that maybe in France the fans there not so much involved in the situation like they do here in UK, so that's my explanation.

Of course feels much better to experience something like I experienced today, that, I mean, because the situation is pretty obvious. The stand of the players from Ukraine was pretty clear, and we have to accept it and respect this position.

Yeah, we have to do it and also fans they have to expect this. Yeah, was glad to have this kind of reaction here.

**Q. I spoke to Angie a couple weeks ago about what's happening back home, and she's obviously from Nova Kakhovka, which has been really badly affected. Again, this might be a difficult question to answer, but how much contact have you had with people back in Russia? Can you talk about what the experience is like there if you can?**

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, yeah, of course I have friends in Russia. My family, my parents are still in Russia. Well, as you can see, the last few days it's been a big mess also there.

Of course I'm worried. I'm worried for my friends, because my best friends, they actually live in Voronezh, where was one of the biggest, you know, few days ago, there was -- sorry not know in English how to say these words.

**Q. Like a bombing?**

DARIA KASATKINA: No, no, it was not a bombing. It was like the guy with the private army. And Voronezh was one of the cities where they entered.

So I was pretty worried about that, because they were very scared. So was I, because I couldn't do anything except like to offer them to go to my city, because it's more far so was not involved in the situation.

Yeah, we just, I mean, obviously their experience, Ukrainians, they are experiencing way worse situation, but also, I mean, I can feel the same. I'm very worried for the people I love.

Yeah, it is what it is. Unfortunately we have to live in this scenario now. This is the part of our lives. Yeah, it's been a tough year, and we don't know how long it's going to be.

Yeah, we have to just follow the news. Honestly, so far I don't see the end. We have to just accept.

**Q. How do you stop all that worry and concern and doubt affecting the way you play when you're out there competing?**

DARIA KASATKINA: So far, thanks God, it's not, when I'm on the court, I'm not thinking about it. When I'm on the court, I am, you know, in the different state of mind, which actually helps me to turn off from all this. Because since the beginning of the war, I was actually following everything every day. It's been, I mean, it's a lot.

So I was overwhelmed in some moment, and I'm just, yeah, I'm trying to turn off my head at least on the tennis court. It help me a lot. Also the people around me, they are trying to make the atmosphere normal, because as I said, it's been a tough year for most of us. It's very important to have a good atmosphere in the team.

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