

Rothesay International

Friday, 28 June 2024
Eastbourne, England, UK
Devonshire Park

Daria Kasatkina

Press Conference

D. KASATKINA/J. Paolini

3-6, 7-5, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Dasha, you're into your second straight Eastbourne final. What is it about this tournament that brings out the best in you?

DARIA KASATKINA: I don't know. Honestly, I don't know. I think it's just the atmosphere. To be honest, you never know how the tournament is gonna go. Sometimes it's luck; sometimes it's all together.

But I'm really happy that two years in a row this week I'm able to go far and show really good level of tennis.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Can you just talk through the match a little bit and the adjustments that you had to make to get that win?

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, the match was really tough. From the beginning I felt Jasmine was there. She was pushing. I mean, pushing me a lot on the match. She was very aggressive. She was everywhere.

I just felt that she's winning more points than me. So, yeah, I was kind of, to be honest, I was kind of ready to book a car to London. But I was just there. You know, I was saying to myself, okay, just try to keep your serve and then do maximum you can on the return and try to get every point possible.

Because on grass, everything can turn very, very fast. That was my plan. There was no particular plan in terms of playing, like, the tactics or whatever. We were just battling each other, and I think at the end it was quite a good match.

Q. You have really got a good relationship with Eastbourne and the crowd. You come back every year. I wonder if we ought to sort of bring the whole Wimbledon tournament down here to Eastbourne, you go sailing through. Sorry, that's a silly one.

Question: The pivotal game was 2-2 in the third set, wasn't it, and you came back from Love-40. How



were you feeling then?

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, yeah, I saved that game, but also in the second set, Jasmine saved the game from Love-40 down, so we kind of exchanged this one (smiling).

Yeah, that was super-important moment. I'm not sure. I think I was playing against the wind at that moment, but it was always changing, so I'm not sure. But, yeah, to save that game was very important, because then I break straightaway in the next game.

Yeah, you know, when the match is tight and you are losing this opportunity, very big opportunity, it's tough. So I knew it. I knew that for her it's going to be a bit maybe difficult mentally, and that was the moment where I told to myself, okay, now you have to push more, don't miss, and try to catch every opportunity, because now is the moment.

Q. Emma said yesterday that she thinks you're one of the toughest players to face on a windy day, that you play very well in those conditions.

DARIA KASATKINA: Thank you.

Q. Do you think that's true, firstly? Do you think that's part of the reason for your success down here at Eastbourne?

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, it's possible, honestly, yes, there is some truth I think in her words, because in Eastbourne, first of all, it's quite windy most of the times. In the very windy days, it's coming to being very consistent. So more balls you put inside the court, more difficult it is for opponent.

In this one, I'm not too bad (smiling). I can turn on, and to put as many balls as you can, it's something I enjoy. So I think that's also I can change the rhythm. I'm using a lot of slices I can hit sometimes.

Yeah, I know this is tough to face me on the days like this, and I mean, yeah, last year was the same. Was very windy. I was able to, you know, going through this difficult conditions a bit better than the opponent.

So, yeah, in the windy days, I think it's more advantage for me. Depends who I play, of course, but I cannot say

that I don't like to play with the wind.

Q. I have to ask you about What The Vlog. Last week it was about Berlin, and the title for What The Vlog I think was something like "Worst Tournament."

DARIA KASATKINA: It was a question.

Q. It was a question mark, true.

DARIA KASATKINA: It was a question, yes.

Q. And then "Tournament without improvement," full stop, I think in the description maybe.

DARIA KASATKINA: This is true.

Q. I got that fact right. But in terms of if you win the title in Eastbourne, would it be "Eastbourne, best tournament," no question mark?

DARIA KASATKINA: (Laughter.) Well, I don't know if the best, but Eastbourne is a really good tournament, I must tell you. Yeah, since my first visit here I think five or six years ago, was a huge improvement, really.

So this is the truth. They improved a lot. LTA, we can see how they are really taking care of their tournaments.

Talking about last week, yes, I must tell you it was a bit of a clickbait (smiling). It was a question, question, so if you watch, you can answer yourself. Was it good or bad? But the truth is that, yeah, since the last year, which you can also watch on the channel from the last year, you can see that it stayed quite the same.

Q. So today is Friday Pride Day with the LTA. You can see the rainbow all around. How do you feel about this kind of visibility through a tennis tournament?

DARIA KASATKINA: Nice, nice. Like not in many places we can see so many rainbows everywhere. Even feels a bit awkward, I must tell you.

But, yeah, thank you to you guys to doing this, organizing all this. Everyone is with the rainbow wristbands or some shoelaces, so it's really nice. Especially for me, coming from the country specifically where it's not very welcome, this kind of sign. So for me, yeah, it's very nice and very important.

Yeah, thank you for doing that. Not only for me. I think for the people, I hope they enjoy it. Like this, we can also show to the other parts of the world that there is nothing scary about it at all, yeah (smiling).

Q. Looking ahead to facing Leylah tomorrow, just what is the challenge do you think of facing her on

this surface and in these conditions?

DARIA KASATKINA: It's going to be very, very tough match, because Leylah, if you see from side, can look a bit like she's playing a Ping-Pong with you. She's very close to the line. She's taking the ball very early.

On grass, it's an advantage. She's playing great this week. She beat very good players. Yeah, it's gonna be very tough match. Another one, like every match.

Everyone wants to win in the finals, so it's gonna be tough but I hope interesting. It's gonna be still a bit different compared to the finals last year, I think, because they're playing a bit different style with Madison. But I hope for a good match.

Q. I think this is your fourth final I think of this year?

DARIA KASATKINA: Yeah.

Q. How do you rate your season? It seems quietly very, very good, no?

DARIA KASATKINA: Fourth final, I would rate it 4 out of 5. Not too bad. Could be better, but quite good. Still, I don't know, three more months to go? Three, four months to go for the season?

THE MODERATOR: Five months.

DARIA KASATKINA: It's already July almost. My God, we have such a short offseason. I mean more behind. We have more in the past than in front.

So it's not bad. 4 out of 5, very good. I stay with that.

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