

Miami Open presented by Itaú

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Miami, Florida, USA

Jessica Pegula

Mixed Zone Interview



J. PEGULA/P. Badosa

4-1 [Ret.]

Q. The two sets that you have played, how do you feel they have been going?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I've definitely played really, really clean tennis the last two sets. Again, I have lost one game in those almost two sets. So definitely playing really clean tennis I think right from the start.

I think that's helped, I don't want to say get a retirement, but sometimes you just never know how someone is going to react when they get out there, even though you know they are not feeling well.

Just trying to focus on myself and play the best tennis I could, and I've been able to do that.

Q. Absolutely, if you're a tough player people don't want to have to push through. Additionally, you said that was your first match out on Hard Rock. Even though it didn't end super well for Paula, how did it feel?

JESSICA PEGULA: It felt great. It was a really cool court. My warmup today was the first time I've hit on it. It was different from what I thought. I don't even think I've walked out there.

It was a really cool court, actually. I thought they did a really good job of incorporating the stadium and also building the stands, and it looked like they had some nice suites and flowers and stuff on the side for everyone. Seemed like a really cool court. I'd love to play again with more of a crowd too. It would be fun.

Q. There's kind of two ways you can look at what's happened so far, that you're well rested for the next rounds or you're kind of hesitant about not having played as much tennis. Which one is it for you?

JESSICA PEGULA: Oh, I definitely feel like I'm well rested. I have played almost two sets. It's kind of like a

confidence boost, because I have played well and people have stopped. I think at this stage I will take it, especially going against either person, either Petra, I think it's going to be a lot more physical. Happy I'm rested.

Q. Finally, tennis players don't get to spend a lot of time at home when they are playing at tournaments. Do you think that's helped at all being more comfortable out here, getting to go home each day?

JESSICA PEGULA: Yeah, I think it's been really nice. I have had a nice routine at home. It's a little different because I kind of feel like I'm coming to a practice almost, but I have been able to find my routine and rhythm from being at home, and I get to go home and see my dogs. It's always a win when you get to see your dogs.

Q. Did you sense kind of early on that she was maybe not 100%?

JESSICA PEGULA: I think from her last match I could tell that she probably wasn't going to be 100% by today, but again, I have no idea what happened or how she was feeling or if she recovered or if it was quick. It's just hard to know in those situations. It can be kind of awkward.

Q. Then when you started playing, it kind of dawned on you?

JESSICA PEGULA: I didn't really notice that much. I was trying to focus on my side. She broke me first game, and she hit a winner. She's, like, Come on. I was, like, Okay, this isn't going to just be another match.

But I just tried to refocus on myself, and I don't think I really thought she was going to retire, like maybe not that quickly, maybe a set or, if anything, but not that soon.

Q. You just said you are obviously rested. Can there be a downside? You played a set and a half, five days by the time you get out there for the semis. Is it kind of a double-edged sword in some respects?

JESSICA PEGULA: Of course. I think you can play well -- I mean, either way. Depends how next match goes. I could lose 0-0 and be, I wish I got more match play, or I



could win 0-0 and be, Wow, I feel great.

I think it just depends on how the next matches go. Either way, it's the situation, you know, it is what it is. I guess you try and deal with it the best you can, but try to look at it as a positive way and think, wow, I'm really rested and I feel good.

Q. This is probably one of your best runs in terms of Masters tournaments? Anything you have done different in the last week and a half?

JESSICA PEGULA: Not really. I made semis in Montreal, which was totally different than this tournament, because I think every match I had was three sets. So now this tournament is different scenario.

No, I think I'm playing really well this week. I think I found my game a little bit. I wasn't feeling too great honestly the whole year, and even in Indian Wells I didn't feel that great.

But I was able to have a really good practice week the week before the tournament, being here, being home, and kind of found my game again. I'm happy with that.

Q. I'm sure you have been asked a million times about your parents and the Bills, but them being involved in a big sporting organization, is there anything as a tennis player you can drag from that, the way people are training or things like that?

JESSICA PEGULA: Honestly, no, because it's so different. It's totally different, a team sport, than an individual sport. It's a weird -- I think I relate a lot to the athletes individually, but as far as like a team, I think it's completely different.

It is cool, though, being back here. I have been here for football games a couple times, so it's kind of a cool feeling. It feels so different when there's not a game and there's is a tennis court out there. That's just like a cool scenario that I feel like is something awesome that I can share with my family.

But as far as similarities, it's really...

Q. You said you related individually to just training methods, stuff like that?

JESSICA PEGULA: I think more like mindset-wise, like being an athlete, having a 24/7 job, especially when they're in season or preseason, everything is kind of revolved around your performance and how you go out the next day and next day for practice and all that stuff.

So I think more like mindset like that is something I can

relate to. As far as the teams, it's different.

Q. Obviously there is a new stadium coming to Buffalo in a few years. They put in an F1 track. Have you checked this out at all? It's crazy how much this place has changed in three years.

JESSICA PEGULA: It's crazy how much they have done in the last two weeks since I have been here. We've seen entire stands go up from player dining in like the last week. It's insane.

But I became a pretty big fan of F1 after the Netflix series. It's pretty cool to see it coming here in Miami. I think we are going to be in Europe when it's here, which is kind of a bummer, I wish I could go.

Yeah, it's been pretty cool. I don't know how much of it they are going to keep, but it looks cool with the F1 track, the football, the stadium, and the tennis now, it's kind of like a massive sports complex area.

Q. It's a 10-year deal, so...

JESSICA PEGULA: Cool. Hopefully we can get some of that for the tournament, or I heard maybe some of the tents or structures that they will keep can be incorporated into the tournament or something. That would be cool.

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