



WTA 500

Thursday, April 2, 2026

Belinda Bencic def. Sara Beljek
7-6⁴, 6-2
Round of 16

An Interview With Belinda Bencic

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Just your thoughts on the win today.

BELINDA BENCIC: Thank you. Yeah, it was a tough win for sure. Back to clay tennis, it was very, how do you say, yeah, I needed a lot of patience, and trying to get used to her, lefty, kind of tricky game style. So I'm happy to get through this one.

Q. Not an easy first set there. Just talk about digging your way back in that set.

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, for sure. I mean, it was just about trying to kind of stay there, you know, tried to fight for every point, kind of accepting that it's not going to be the prettiest of my matches. And, yeah, just accepting that and kind of, yeah, fighting, trying to stay with her, stay in the rallies, but still kind of trying to find the balance between like not being too aggressive but not, of course, getting too passive.

Q. And could I just get you to maybe look ahead to maybe the two next opponents? We don't know who it might be, but if it was Madison or Bondar. Just your thoughts on those matchups.

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah. I'm not sure I ever played Bondar. So that's going to be a first. And just going to try and see how to play her and watch some videos and some stats.

And, of course, Madi is a very tough opponent. She has a big game. But I'd rather play her here on clay than on hard, let's say. So, yeah, definitely going to watch the match and kind of make a game plan.

Q. Obviously you've been practicing on the clay, but what is the difference in playing the first match on a new surface in several months to a year?

BELINDA BENCIC: All your body hurts. And I need a lot of massage, and your body is just like, you know, and your legs are like, oh, okay, we're on clay here.

It's not very natural for me, but, yeah, I think you have to generate a little bit more of your pace. I think rallies are longer, harder to make a winner. It's harder to absorb pace. Yeah.

Q. As a parent, do we break the rules on bedtime when you're playing a late-night match that maybe stretches or are you guys strict about your rules on sleep?

BELINDA BENCIC: No. We have to be very, like, spontaneous, very flexible. I think now it's about kind of finding the right timing, like seeing when she starts to be tired, but is not too tired, because when she's too tired, it's not possible to sleep anymore.

But we have to be very flexible because of all the jet lags, and even the three hours coming from Indian Wells to Miami, it just messes up everything.

So, yeah, we're just kind of winging it, and Bella is great. So we're okay. Sometimes I fall asleep even before her.

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Kelly A. McKee
Savannah Court Reporting, Inc.
Savannah, GA
kadmcr@yahoo.com



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Q. Well done today. So obviously I think this is the first time that you played Sara. And I guess when you were preparing for her, obviously she has her own strategy of how she wants to approach you. I guess at times I felt like on her forehand she would kind of loft it a little bit, make it a little more spin. How much did you, I guess, expect that and how much did you know about maybe what she was going to do to play you today?

BELINDA BENCIC: No. I watched her a lot, for sure, but I think it's when you play someone for the first time, it's also really important how you feel, and definitely needed some time to adjust to that.

And, of course, it would be also different if I play her on hard court or here on clay.

Yeah, I think in the end I kind of found my way a little bit and you know what worked and what didn't work. Sometimes I felt like the faster I tried to play or deeper, the more she liked it. She stayed back a lot. So maybe sometimes just kind of not giving her so much pace was maybe better.

Yeah, it's just, I think it's all about problem solving on the court. So, yeah.

Q. Similar question, but I wondered what mental adjustments you had to make, right, especially after the first set.

BELINDA BENCIC: I think always kind of to stay there and be like, okay. Sometimes you're almost embarrassed about your mistakes and ashamed. You're just like, oh, my God. What are people thinking right now. And then you're like, no, you can't think like this. You just go every point. You just try to fight, and yeah, just stayed resilient and don't try to play too pretty, just really try to win the match, and that's all that counts.

End of Interview

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Kelly A. McKee
Savannah Court Reporting, Inc.
Savannah, GA
kadmcr@yahoo.com