

THE POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND THE RIGHT DIRECTION

THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN WAS HELD THIS YEAR IN MELBOURNE AMIDST GREAT CHALLENGES IN A MOVE TO RESUME NORMALCY. SPEECHES BY JAYNE HRDLICKA, CHAIRWOMAN AND PRESIDENT, TENNIS AUSTRALIA, AND THE WOMEN AND MEN SINGLE'S FINALISTS HIGHLIGHT THE POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND IMPORTANCE OF TAKING THE STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.



Jayne Hrdlicka, Chairwoman and President, Tennis Australia.

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Women's Singles Final, February 20, 2021

It is a great honor to stand here tonight and have the opportunity to recognize two of the world's best female athletes in Naomi Osaka and Jennifer Brady. Congratulations to both of them. The tenacity, hard work and drive that was seen tonight is an inspiration for many, and I am sure there are millions of young women and girls watching tonight who would be motivated to work that much harder and pursue their own dreams as a consequence of this match.

Jennifer, your determination and grit tonight and for the last two weeks is super impressive. It wasn't your night but you will be back here and you will be taking the trophy the next time you do. And, Naomi, if anybody had any doubt you are a fighter at the core, your tenacious spirit, was on display on full force tonight. And, it is not just on court, it is off court as well. In the last 12 months you stepped into your voice and you have made a huge difference in everything that you have focused on and it is truly inspiring and an opportunity for all of us to step back and look at ways we can make a difference in the community. Thank you for that. Tonight of course is not your first Grand Slam but it is your second Australian Open

and fourth Grand Slam, and we are excited to watch the rest of your career unfold.

As Todd indicated, this has not been the easiest Australian Open to stage. It is countless hours, and months and months of many people getting next to no sleep with the drive to do one thing and that is to bring hope to the world. That we are on our way to being back to normal. Live sports and fans in the stand should be the future. So… well done. There are a lot of people to thank in this process and at the top of this list is the Victorian Government. We worked hard together to ensure that we could stage an Australian Open that kept the players safe, most importantly the community safe, and enabled us to begin our journey to a new post COVID normal. Thank you to the Victorian Government, we really appreciate the support.

To the Australia Tennis team who have worked doggedly for the last four months to find a way every time a new problem surfaced to make sure that we could hold tonight with fans in the stands. Thank you to all of you. And, to all of the people who have come on site and worked tirelessly with rules changing, and a five day stand down in the middle of it, we have got an extraordinary team of people who came together and made it possible to stage this event. So thank you to all of them.

And, the players it goes without saying that they worked very hard to be professional tennis players, and they work hard in every event. But, this event was particularly challenging given that all of the requirements in order to keep the community safe and, everybody stood up and was into that and we are so proud in the way everyone worked together through constantly changing stance, to make that possible. Thank you to the players as well.

Our partners, KIA, we go from strength to strength in our relationship with KIA and thank you for that. And everyone of our partners has really worked closely with us, so it was an adventure because we were never quite sure of what was ahead of us. That proved to be the right way to manage the event but together we pulled it off, and we could not have done it without you, so thank you.

To our fans, it is so good to have people in the stands and we look forward to 2022 to even more of you and thank you to those of you who are at home tonight.

Men’s Singles Final, February 21, 2021

What an exceptional finish to two amazing weeks of tennis in Melbourne Park and tonight of course was an opportunity to see a spectacular match, and clearly the

crowning of the king of Melbourne Park, Novak Djokovic. Tonight what a tenacious competitor you are, you had no intention of leaving the stadium tonight without the trophy in hand. This is your ninth Australian Open Final, 50 percent of your 18 Grand Slam Championships. You are an inspiration to people around the world, it is quite clear you work very hard, you are the hardest worker on the tour and it really pays dividends for you. Congratulations you are the king of Melbourne Park. You have a very special relationship here.

Daniil, tonight was not your night but you were a fierce competitor. You are the third Russian to make the finals of the Australian Open in our history. You should be very proud of your achievements. Novak was unbeatable tonight but we are all sure that we will see you back here taking the crown off of him at some point in the future. Congratulations.

Both players, and frankly all the players who were with us in the last three weeks, have been playing under exceptional circumstances. In fact, the last 12 months have been exceptional circumstances for everybody around the world. It has been a time of heart felt challenge, a time of deep lost and extraordinary sacrifice for everyone. With vaccinations on the way, rolling out in many countries around the world, it is now the time for optimism and hope, for the future. So we hope for the those of you at home tonight watching, and for those of you in the stands today, and for the many people who have been able to join us over the last couple of weeks, we brought a bit of hope for the hard work ahead of getting back to normal.

There is a team of people behind us that has enabled for this great event to take place. Tennis Australia team has worked tirelessly, in the last three months to find a way to stage this event in a manner that protected the community, protected the players and enable them to be match fit for the event. Congratulations to the Tennis Australia team.

There are many other people to thank that enabled this great night to take place and the last couple of weeks. At the top of that list is the Victorian Government, without you we could not have done this. And, a huge thank you to the thousands of people who came to work everyday of the last three weeks. With a smile on their faces, keen to be back and keen to make everybody’s experience exceptional despite the circumstances. Thank you to everyone involved in the Australian Open.

To our partners each of you have had a very challenging year this year, but despite that you stepped up and said we are here to help. All of our partners hung

with us. On top of that list was KIA, 20 years of partnership, thank you Damien from the bottom of our hearts. In addition to KIA we have Luzhou Laojiao, Rolex and Emirates who are also our partners and are also a big help in this process. And many other partners who were part of the family.

Another big thank you goes to our fans; you have helped make this a very special occasion. You are a very opinionated group of people but at home or here tonight we are really thankful that you are here. And we look forward to seeing you next year.



Naomi Osaka, Winner and Jennifer Brady, Finalist.

Jennifer Brady, Finalist

Hello everyone, I would like to first congratulate Naomi for another Grand Slam title, she is such an inspiration to us all. And what she is doing for the game is

amazing and getting the sport out there. I hope young girls at home are watching and are inspired by what she is doing. I would also like to congratulate her team, obviously you guys are doing something special, pushing her everyday, and she is only getting better, congratulations.

I would like to say thank you to my team, those two guys over there, Michael and Daniel. Without you guys I would not be standing here tonight. Thank you very much for everything that you have done for me, and let's keep going for more.

Thanks to Craig Tiley and his team, Tennis Australia. You know I was in the quarantine and they did everything that was possible to make me comfortable. I was able to do everything I could in the room. I appreciate everything that they did for me. So thank you.

Thanks to all the sponsors, ball kids, referees, chair umpires, I mean everybody out here who came to watch, to support me, it is really special for me. And, all the fans back home watching, I know mom you are watching in front of the TV, probably crying. It was special to play in front of fans in my first Grand Slam final. Hopefully standing on this stage next time with this girl over here, but tonight it was not to be and hopefully there will be many more. Thank you.

Naomi Osaka, Winner

Hello everyone, firstly I want to congratulate Jennifer. We played in the semis of the US Open a couple of months ago and I told everyone that would listen to me, that you were going to become a problem, and I was right. It is really incredible to me. It is hard to play you, and see your growth in the past few months is really cool for me to see and, I know that you are probably working hard so I want to congratulate your team over there as well. I know for me that my team is like my family so I am sure you guys have a lot of cool adventure together. Congratulations to you guys as well. I know you talked about your mom and I am sure she is very proud of you. I'm definitely sure your friends and family are very proud of you and I think we are going to be playing much more matches so here's to that.

I would like to thank my team. I have been with them for too long, for more than a month. We have been in quarantine together. For me they are like my family. They are the ones with me through my training, my matches and through my nervous talks before the matches and I am really appreciative of them. I really want to thank you guys and this one is for you.

Lastly, but not least, I want to thank you guys. Thank you for coming and watching, it feels really incredible for me. I didn't play my last Grand Slam with fans so just to have this energy really means a lot. Thank you so much for coming. Thank you for opening your hearts and arms towards us. For sure playing a Grand Slam now is a super privilege and I will not take it for granted, so thank you for this opportunity. Thank you to the ball kids, the volunteers, Craig Tiley, the tournament director, everyone for making this tournament possible and hopefully we will be back next year. So thank you so much.



Novak Djokovic, Winner and Daniil Medvedev, Finalist.

Daniil Medvedev, Finalist

It is never easy to speak when you have just lost a final of a Grand Slam, but I am going to try my best, better than on the court hopefully! First of all, congrats to Novak and your team. I mean nine Grand Slams in Australia in total is amazing and it is probably not your last ones. I have no words to say. Just to tell a story, I first practiced with Novak when I was number 500-600 in the world, in Monaco and he was already number one after just winning the Wimbledon. I thought he was not going to speak to me or something because the guy was a god to me. Because I was shy I did not speak and he was asking me ques□tions and talking to me like a friend. I was re□ally surprised then and it has never changed since I was number 600 in the world or number four in the world. You are a great sportsman and person, so congratulations.

Big thanks to Gilles and Daria, my coach and my wife. Not the best day today but probably a good three months after some tough circum□stances. Thank you guys for being with me in Australia for a long time, and hopefully we will have a Grand Slam soon.

Then, of course, I want to thank Craig and Tennis Australia for making this event happen. We, all tennis players, me, Novak at some point, would not be happy with quarantine or something else but I would not be standing here with a final□ist trophy for this tournament if I had not played, so thank you for making it happen.

Last but not least I would like to thank you guys, for inviting us even if it was not easy for some of you as we know. But we are still here and I see you are happy too with the tennis. I really wanted to play this match longer and make it more entertaining for you but today was not the day but thanks a lot for coming and supporting me. Your energy is very good. Thank you.

Novak Djokovic, Winner

Good evening everyone. I would like to return the nice words to Daniil. First of all, class act, you are a great guy, and a great person. You show again why. We should spend more time together, to practice more in Monaco. You do not call me anymore in the last few years. But it is nice to see that you are thinking good things about me. Thank you so much. I really like Daniil as a person off the court, he is great. Always very friendly and outgoing but on the court he is one of the toughest players faced in my life. It is a matter of time when you are going to hold a Grand Slam that is for sure. If you don't mind waiting a few more years. I would like everyone to once more appreciate what he has done – 20 match winning streak in the last couple of months, amazing.

Next, I would like to thank my team; Goran, Adov and Uli, and of course everyone back home, Marco, Mia and my parents, my brothers, my wife, my kids, and everyone who has been with me along all the way, alongside in this ride. It has been a roller coaster ride for me especially the last couple of weeks. But Uli special thanks to you, dedicated so much time to make sure that I could play. And, I am eternally grateful to you, and all your guys support and energy. Thank you guys I love you. Thank you very much.

There are many mixed feelings on what has happened in the last month or so with tennis players coming to Australia. But I think when we draw a line at the end it was

a successful tournament. The organizers I want to congratulate the head of Tennis Australia, Craig Tiley for making an effort. They made a great effort. Look, it wasn’t easy, it was very challenging at many different levels. But they should be proud of themselves of what they have put together, and allowed us to come to Australia and be standing here as Daniil said. And, the closing ceremony thank you very much for making it possible. Appreciate it. Thank you.

Last but not least I would like to thank this court, and I would like to thank Rod Laver Arena. I love you each year, more and more. The love affair keeps going. Thank you very much.