

# Western & Southern Open

Friday, August 19, 2022

Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

## Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference



A. SABALENKA/Z. Shuai

6-4, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Congratulations on a great week so far. Can you just talk about today's match and what do you think was the key? I mean, Zhang Shuai played really, really well.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, she played really good. I'm super happy with the win. I think the key was that in the second set, even if my serve didn't work, I was still focusing on things what I have to do.

I stayed calm, and I tried my best. I think this was the key.

**Q. Do you feel as though, like last night you were joking that with the wobbles that you wanted to call your psychologist after the second set, but how mentally challenging has it been for you kind of this season, managing emotions, managing your game with all the ups and downs, and how proud are you that you have managed to make another WTA 1000 semi?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, yeah, this season was really crazy for me, a lot of challenges. Yeah, I'm super proud of myself that I was able to handle all these tough moments this year and I was able to fight. Even if something didn't work, I was still keep trying my best, still fighting for it.

Yeah, I'm super happy to be in another semifinal, and I will do my best tomorrow.

**Q. What do you think has clicked for you this week?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I change a lot on my serve. Yeah, I just change, I wouldn't say the technique, but, yeah, I just worked with a biomechanic guy who is really good. I would say that we just ask -- so he's helping me as a coach with my serve, and we are working a lot on my serve and my game. So I think that's why I kind of kept playing better.

**Q. Sorry, I didn't understand the word. He's a...**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Biomechanic.

**Q. Biomechanic?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Biomechanic. Bad English, sorry.

**Q. Gotcha. It sounded special.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Biomechanic, sorry.

**Q. Why did you decide to bring him on, and what has he helped you with specifically?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Because we tried everything this season, and nothing really worked well for me with this serve.

Yeah, I think we just were looking for something with what can help me. Yeah, there was a lot of things that I was doing wrong on my serve.

Right now I think I'm on the right way to fix it. I'm working on a lot of stuff to fix my serve.

**Q. Then what does it mean for you to make it this far in such a big event and to also just manage, you know, you had a crazy match last night, quick turnaround, kind of, to get back on court today, managed it really well with the rain delay. It's been pretty tricky.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, it's been really tricky, but I'm just focus on myself and control what I can. Yeah, I finished really late last night and they put me, I would say, early match for me (smiling). I didn't get enough sleep. I think I slept only almost five hours.

I think the way I'm managing all this stuff and the way I'm able to focus on myself instead of on another things helping me a lot this week.

**Q. Looking ahead, you will play either Jessie or Caroline. Can you talk about just the challenges of**



**both those opponents?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, they are playing really well. Jessica playing really well this season. Garcia playing really well this week. Both of them are really tough opponents, and I had a lot of matches against them, a lot of tough matches against them.

Yeah, it's going to be interesting, and I'm really looking forward for this match.

**Q. A quick question, you know, we saw in San Jose, Dasha won the title there. In Toronto, Simona won the title there. They are a little bit more counter-punching, control-type players. Here in the semifinals it's already three of the biggest hitters of the ball: Madison, Petra and yourself. Do you see any difference in terms of why that might be, that somehow this tournament seems to, in particular, favor the big bangers?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I would say that especially San Jose, the bounce was really high there and was really good for Daria. Toronto, kind of same bounce.

Here, courts are a little bit faster and the bounce not that high. So maybe that's why big hitters was able to get to the semifinal (smiling).

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