

Western & Southern Open

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Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Karolina Muchova

Press Conference



K. MUCHOVA/A. Sabalenka

6-7, 7-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, into the final in Cincinnati. Talk us through your thoughts on the match and how pleased you are with your performance.

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, it was very tough match, tough battle, similar to what we played few months back in Paris I would say.

Again, I would say the same: it could go both ways. It was, yeah, just pure fight. I'm glad that I got through. Yeah, to be in my first 1000 final, it's great achievement, and I'm really pleased with that.

THE MODERATOR: Who would like the first question?

Q. In terms of how you felt coming into this tournament, quick turnaround from Montreal, how surprised are you that you were able to manage the matches and the energy level to make a final?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, well, Montreal was a great start, I would say. I played three matches, very tough, tough matches, from the first round. I beat good opponents in two sets. That didn't happen here (smiling). Then I lost to Iga, yeah, again close match. It was a great start, I would say, to this tour.

Yeah, glad I could pick up here from the first round. I would say every round was very, very tough for me here. To get through all the rounds, it's great for the confidence. Yeah, I'm just pleased with the way I handled the matches and the way I played them.

And energy levels? Sorry, I forget about that one (smiling).

It's tough. It's tough. I can feel it in my bones that I played all three-setters. Just yesterday I had a little time off. Obviously, my body feels it.

Q. The media and tennis fans have been talking about what is your favorite surface. Could you...

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I don't even think I have a favorite surface. Well, I like to play all of them because with different surface you can use different weapons to suit the game a little bit different. I like to enjoy that on all the different surfaces.

What fits me the most I think is the fast surface. It fits my game to going to the net, play aggressive. So I think for now, it's probably my best surface. But I like them all.

Q. Here is the best surface for you?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, this is a hard court, so it's okay (laughter).

Q. The surface is fast or...

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I feel it's pretty fast. I would say, as well, all the courts here are different. I played on the Porsche Court, it was faster. Grandstand a little bit slower. Yeah, the balls are flying here. Always trying to, yeah, get used to it, get used to the surface. They are different in every different country.

Yeah, I mean, I like this one.

Q. Now that you're a few months away from Paris and that experience, what did you learn from that final that you feel like will help you tomorrow and moving forward in these big situations?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I think just the experience that I played a final is great, to have that, to know how to handle some situations. Yeah, I hope that will help me tomorrow. This is just my second final, so I'll try to bring it on tomorrow, what I've learned in Paris, too. Yeah, try to maybe improve tomorrow. We'll see.

It's completely different. It's different surface, different tournament. Also I'll just try to take it as another match and focus for that - on that (smiling).

Q. I felt like your slice today was surgical, stayed low. Do you think that's a weapon you have against Aryna

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that causes her trouble?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I was trying to change against her, of course. I always see my game a little negative, so I was actually not so pleased with my slice today.

But, yeah, there was some great ones and the worst ones. But I think overall it worked, even though here and there it was not good. She had to go in the court and back. That's what I was trying. Even though it was here and there not working, overall I think it's a weapon.

Q. (Question regarding her game style.)

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, I always played like that. I think I'm just trying to improve it and work on it. I have a team of people around me who like me, I would say, to play that way. We are building on that. Not to play just like running left, right, improving that, but to focus more on the variety. I like to play that way, so I enjoy it. That's why I play it.

Q. A year ago you were ranked outside the top hundred. You'll be top 10 on Monday guaranteed. That's a pretty incredible climb in 12 months.

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, I think I was even outside of 200 end of the last year, so it's incredible. I mean, I always was hoping and believing that I can be up there, but you never know.

In the past, my health was a big issue. It always stopped me. Yeah, I'm just really, really pleased how it's going. To be in top 10, I can say it for rest of my life that I was top 10 tennis player from all of the people. It's great achievement.

Q. Looking ahead, you've never played Coco, and it's a big one. She's young, full of energy.

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I have birthday on Monday (smiling). I'm starting to feel it.

Q. What do you make of that matchup? What do you see with your tennis IQ that you can kind of do to stop her?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, I don't know her well. I don't think we even ever practiced together. I never even really followed her matches. I'll look into that.

I know she is a great mover. Powerful, again. I saw some rallies today when she played Iga. Very, very tough. Like every round here, it's very tough.

So, yeah, I'm looking forward to that.

Q. I am sure you have been asked this question a lot. What is the secret of your country? Why your country keeps providing tennis players?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Nobody ever asked me that (smiling).

Yeah, I don't know. Still the same answer from me. I mean, I think great coaches. The fact that it's so many of us there, the young girls looking up to us. When I was younger, I was looking up to them. You see that you can, that they are there. Why I cannot make it if they are there? If we have a practice, you can see, okay, it's not like something special, and you have that belief. Maybe that. I don't know.

With me, I can talk for myself. Yeah, it's great, though. It's unbelievable, yeah.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit more about the club that you and Marketa train at. It sounds dumb, but what's the name of it? Who else trains there? What's the vibe like there?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, it's actually Tennis Lawn Club, like the oldest one in Prague. I'm from the other part, actually, from Czech Republic. I just moved to Prague. I don't know how long I'm there, like four, five years not even. I joined the club later. Marketa is playing there since she's junior. I guess since she started to play.

It's I would say family club. It feels like a family there. We don't have there anything like too special. I would say it's not like there would be amazing gym or amazing stuff around. It's pretty basic, I would say.

But the energy is great. I like to hang around. Even with the sport manager, we can always chat. We support each other. Yeah, it's me, Marketa, Tereza Martincova is there. We have some young guns, Bartunkova, if you know maybe.

Yeah, it's very I would say low-key club, but it's nice.

Q. When you're home, do you train with Marketa and Tereza or do you keep to yourself?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, we train with each other. It's not like we would train every day with each other. When we are there and preparing some tournaments, we always talk and we hit together.

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