

# Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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## Elina Svitolina

Press Conference



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THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. I'm wondering for you, how much of the US Open did you wind up watching? If you watched it, were you ever regretting not going or at peace with your decision? What was it like to see a Grand Slam tournament without you there?**

ELINA SVITOLINA: Hi, everyone. I didn't watch so much of US Open and Cincinnati. Obviously I knew the results, especially I think in the -- I mean, I was just trying to focus on myself, because when you're not there, you are a little bit upset that maybe you should have go. So I try to really protect myself of this bad thinking, because I make my decision.

So I didn't follow so much. I just knew, you know, the semifinal, final result. Same with US Open. I think maybe I watch a little bit more of the guys.

Well, I watched the final yesterday until very late, so that was kind of I think one match, one full match that I watched from all the US Open.

Yeah, this was the only one, I think.

**Q. What had been your decision-making in terms of why you didn't want to go to New York? What ultimately was the main factor? And did you think that that factor, did it seem like it was different than you expected it to be from looking at it from far away, the tournament?**

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, I think there was maybe three factors that made me do that decision. I think one, for sure, was everything was not certain about coming back to Europe. That was one of them.

I think also the risk that I could catch something on the plane, such a long flight. I didn't feel very comfortable about that. And also about my team, if they would get, you know, sick, I would get withdrawn. So this was kind of one of the factors.

The second one, I think it was that my preparation for the

clay court would not be as good, saying right now I have been practicing in one-and-a-half months on clay court, so that at least gives me a good chance to play well in Rome and Roland Garros.

Unfortunately Madrid was canceled, so this was on my calendar, as well. So three tournaments would be great preparation for me for to go to Roland Garros.

So I think actually preparation would be one of the main factors, I would say to, yeah, to play, to play well in Roland Garros.

**Q. Can you talk about just what your seven months was like? What was your mindset throughout most of it? Was it difficult to kind of continue to train and stay fit and do what you needed to do? Did you put the racquets down for a while? Just what was your seven months kind of like?**

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, it was a roller coaster, I would say, because at the beginning I was trying to stay really fit. I was actually very fit, as I ever been before (smiling).

Then after maybe two-and-a-half months I was, like, Why am I super fit and not doing anything? You know, I'm not going to play, you know, everything is canceled. So your motivation goes down a little bit, as expected.

So I stopped for a little bit. I was not practicing, because we were not allowed to practice. I think I didn't practice for three months, something like that, it was. And then I start hitting a little bit with Gaël when we were allowed to practice on the courts.

And then there was lots of TikToks. You have seen everything (smiling). And then when everything was start to be open, I was trying to get back in shape with my fitness coach, more specifically tennis. In the end I was just trying to enjoy my time at home, because sometimes I think you are thinking too much what's gonna be, what's ahead, and that's kind of distracting you. So this time I really enjoy to stay at home, to finally try to enjoy my time.

This was I think one of the times that I really enjoy staying in one place for longer than few weeks. So I finally finished my nutrition studies, which was good. I had time to really get into it and finally finish. It was a big success, I would

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say, for me. Another trophy.

**Q. You looked very proud of yourself with the diploma for your degree. Can you just talk a little bit about that in terms of what motivated you? I know you had been working on it for a while, but what motivated you to kind of study all that, and what did you have to finish to finally get the piece of paper?**

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, that was I think maybe two years and a little bit took me to get this piece of paper. It was lots of reading, lots of writing, memorizing lots of stuff.

I actually started because I was really interested in nutrition, what's affecting our body and how to feel better in general. Because, you know, traveling the world, you sometimes just miss these small details. And I think it's so important not only for the athletes. For the athletes it's actually essential, but even for other people, you know, lots of people who don't know that even small things can affect your mood, how do you feel. And then it's kind of like, you know, the bucket of water which comes together, and that it's full and your body just gives up.

It was very interesting for me to really get away from tennis and really focus on nutrition, and that all, you know, what affects my body, my mind.

So this was very interesting. I learned so much. Very happy I could finally finish it, because it was really tough. You know, the exams were tough. I had to write a lot, which was not easy for me. Lots of typing. So I'm not jealous of you guys to type a lot on your laptops, because, yeah, it can get you.

**Q. As you restart now, as you look ahead to Rome and Roland Garros, and you said you have been training on clay and things like that, can you have expectations right now that are similar to what you may have gone into this section of the season, the clay season, anyway, in the past? Or does this feel very, very different for you?**

ELINA SVITOLINA: It definitely feels different, because we don't have WTA Finals. For sure, you know, if you take end of September, normally you are hustling. Me, I'm hustling all the time for the finals. For the past three years, I was really under pressure of getting into the WTA Finals.

This year is a little bit different, because you are just -- I will play probably four or five tournaments more if there will be more tournaments added. But in the end, I'm just trying to enjoy myself being on the court, being back with the, you know, again meeting those emotions, being under pressure, trying to, you know, to dig myself out of some

different kind of situations.

So this feeling, for sure, I think lots of players and myself included, I miss them. Playing for those emotions now more than anything else, I would say, which is kind of enjoyable, because most of the time we are playing to get somewhere, to get better and better.

Right now it's more like enjoying of this feeling which we missed for a couple of months.

**Q. Related to the nutritional stuff, I was talking to a few players in New York, because when I saw them they looked a lot fitter than they had before the shutdown. I asked them, is this because of working out? They said a lot of times was because they were finally home for a long enough time and could eat at home and weren't eating on the road. It never occurred to me that it could be difficult for tennis players on the road to maintain nutritional discipline, I guess. Can you give any insight into that? Like how hard is it to eat healthfully and get what you need when you are traveling internationally all the time?**

ELINA SVITOLINA: Yeah, actually I was talking with one of my teachers about that, because as you mentioned, it's very tough for the tennis player to eat like, for example, three times and then you have two more snacks. Normally when you are waiting for a match, you have to fill yourself.

So you're having breakfast. Then you're having a small snack. Then after the match, you have to refuel yourself. So you're eating again and again, and then you're thinking maybe for tomorrow I'm playing again, so I have to eat. So in the end you end up eating six or seven times, maybe a small amount, but for your type of the body is too much.

So that's why I think it's kind of not in the same routine. Every day is different. So that's why I think it's getting your body is a little bit like messed up with what's going on. I'm having seven or six or two or whatever times of food intake.

That's why I think it's tough for tennis players to keep the same routine, the same body, I would say, who can maintain that. It takes lots of time, I think, and lots of strength, as well, to not have a snack here, snack there.

You know, the WTA is treating us very good. We have lots of snacks, lots of chocolates, cookies, everything. So it's kind of tough, I would say, to maintain the same throughout the year. Actually, also, with the time difference, you know. You end up just giving up, I'd say (smiling).

**Q. I'm sure you enjoy to be around Rome. Did you**

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**have a chance to see something of Rome? Did you see many people with the mask on? Does it make a different effect, different impact than what you were used to in the past years? And also, did you talk with the other guys, the other people who were at the US Open? And do you think that this bubble in Rome is different from the one they had in New York? And how different?**

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, I didn't see anything of Rome, because when we arrived quite early on Tuesday, we made our test, we stayed 24 hours in the room, and then we were just allowed to go on-site. So we didn't leave then. And everything is quite safe, I would say. Everyone is wearing the mask in the hotels everywhere, here, on-site.

At the beginning, for sure, on Tuesday was still a little bit, you know, you could feel that everything is not organized yet well, but in the end, starting from Wednesday and Thursday when all the players start coming from New York and other countries, everything was quite direct and everything was safe.

I spoke with few people about how it was in New York, and they told me they felt very safe and everything was well organized and it was very good.

Here I think is a little bit the same but maybe just a little bit different is that you don't fill the form, how do you feel each day. I think this is the only difference. But the rest, everyone is wearing mask.

The hotels, you cannot leave the hotel. Uber Eats and the food deliveries is all through the concierge. Everything is pretty much the same. I feel myself, and my team, we feel quite safe. We try to respect the protocols.

**Q. Can you tell me just what does it mean, I didn't fill the form? What kind of form they were signing somewhere else in New York?**

ELINA SVITOLINA: It's about how do you feel. You know, if you're sick, if you're feeling any, like if you have a headache or sore throat, you know, this kind of thing. I heard that in New York they were doing every day before they are going on-site they were filling this form.

But I think in the end, if you're feeling a little bit ill, you'd go anyway to the physio or to the doctor to get some medicine. So that's I think the only difference. That's what I heard.

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