

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Garbine Muguruza

Press Conference



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BNP PARIBAS

G. MUGURUZA/C. Gauff

7-6, 3-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. I wanted to ask you a question about how you feel about playing on the clay in September. Are you preparing for a little bit different type of tennis because of the way that it might be a little bit colder, shorter days, maybe slower conditions? Is that something you have been thinking about as you prepare for this part of the season?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Not really. Just packing thicker clothes, I guess (smiling). But in terms of playing, not really. I mean, it's a long time since I don't play clay in September.

But there have been years when I was younger where I didn't play hard court an entire year. I would just play on clay for years in a row, because I grew up in this surface. For me, it's familiar to be playing any time of the year in clay.

But, yeah, for the last decade, yes, it's weird to have now at the end of the summer to still be playing on clay. But the weather seems so nice that we don't feel big difference.

Q. In general, are there some conditions you like better on the clay? Do you like it slower, faster, sunny, cloudy, anything?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: I think sunny is always nicer to be out in a tennis court. Outside, sunny, not too warm but just good temperature. I don't know. 25, sunny, that would be perfect condition.

Q. I wanted to ask what it was like for you when tennis stopped in March? It was difficult for everybody, obviously, but especially for you maybe because you had had such a good start to the year. Did you feel it came at just the bad time for you?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, yes, I think it was a bad

timing, because when you're playing well and you don't want to stop for seven months, that's for sure. I felt like I was in a good momentum and playing well and playing well in many tournaments in a row, and then this happened.

So tennistically probably was tough, but I took the best out of it. I'm happy to be back. But I think the break also was nice to have a break.

Physically, also, I don't remember such a long time without feeling pain or tired or something (smiling). So I did appreciate, also.

Q. Did you play any exhibitions or anything?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: No, I didn't play any type of practice matches. I train hard and I tried to be ready for the US Open, so the US Open was actually the first official match I played, yeah.

Q. You were in Spain, were you, during the Coronavirus?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Switzerland. I was in Geneva the whole time, like, the whole Corona and quarantine and everything, yeah.

Q. Can you just talk through today's match? A tough battle against a new opponent for you. How did you come through that match in the third set?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Yeah, it was a tough match. Looking forward for tough matches.

Yeah, the first set was tight. It could have gone both ways. I was happy that it went my way after a good fight.

I think in the second set, yeah, I missed a couple of shots. I didn't take the opportunities I had, and she was there the whole time.

Then in the third set, it was just a battle, again, and I managed to be solid, to play my game and to take the opportunities I didn't take in the second set.

Yeah, was a good match.

Q. What did you make of her game?

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GARBINE MUGURUZA: I mean, I don't look at her as a different player. I think she's here, she's playing, doesn't matter how old she is. For me, I'm not thinking about that. I think she's a great competitor. She can play very well. She's proven us. She has beaten good players.

Yeah, she's physically very athletic, so that's very good.

Q. Then just how are you feeling on the courts in Rome just in terms of how they are playing and obviously getting more and more repetition, more matches on the surface? Are you feeling like you're snapping into clay form for you?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, I just -- no, I'm just thinking to leave from Rome hopefully with a trophy or playing as many matches as possible, because I don't have that much expectation after didn't play in such a long time. US Open was short.

So, you know, just being here, enjoying as much as I can. I know there is no crowd, so it's also a little bit difficult for me that I love it here and the Italian fans are so loud and so -- you can feel them.

Just being humble on the court and try to play every match like it was the last one.

Q. I wanted to ask about your ankle. Is it right you had an ankle injury before the US Open?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Yes, I had an ankle injury. I have to take care of them. I think also clay court is softer surface for the body, so that helps me.

But, yeah, I didn't quite train as much as I would wanted to before the US Open, because I withdraw from Lexington and Cincinnati. But I'm feeling better now, so it's good that the clay season is actually now.

Q. If I could just switch the subject to Rafa for a minute. So nice to have him back on tour here. And then looking ahead to Paris, he obviously has a chance to match Roger's 20 slams. Just wondering what someone like you thinks that might have on his impact, what impact it might have on his legacy as a player and the way that people continually compare him to Roger.

GARBINE MUGURUZA: You are asking me if Rafa is gonna go to the French Open? Sorry, what? And Roger?

Q. No, I was saying that Rafa has a chance to match Roger's 20 Grand Slams if he wins in Paris. Just

wondering what impact that might have on his legacy.

GARBINE MUGURUZA: They have so many Grand Slams, I lost the count already (smiling).

I guess it's kind of a battle, no, at this point? One up, one down? I think it's a big deal for them because there are so many players -- not so many, three players are in those numbers.

But that would be great. Honestly, that would be great. The fact that there is two players that have that many Grand Slams, actually unbelievable.

I think he has an opportunity. I think he looks fit and strong. Rafa is Rafa. You know, he will never give up. So you really have to beat him.

If he keeps playing, he's going to have the chance sooner or later. And also, he's younger. So we'll see. I would be happy for him, for sure (smiling).

Q. A question on the next match. You'll play either Konta or Begu. Obviously you have had tough matches with Jo in the past before. Can you just talk about what you expect against both those players, specifically on clay. Because I think this would be your first match against Konta on clay.

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Yes, with Konta, we always have long matches as far as I remember. But I think she also loves clay, I believe. And Begu is a good clay-court player.

Honestly, either players are going to be good matches. Is great for me to play good players that love clay. There is a good challenge.

I mean, I have had battles with both of them. I know with one more than the other, but just because I played her I think more recently. Yeah, it's gonna be good.

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